The Formation of Support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

The Role of National Attitudes as Cognitive Heuristics

Bettina Wagner
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Preface

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I thank my parents who trusted all my plans and decisions. They supported my idea of studying political science, even if, at the beginning, we all did not...
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Mainz, April 2011

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<tr>
<td>ADF</td>
<td>Asymptotically distribution free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGFI</td>
<td>Adjusted goodness of fit index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGLS</td>
<td>Arbitrary distribution generalized least squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLBUS</td>
<td>Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>Analysis of Moment Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Bias-corrected</td>
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<td>CCEB</td>
<td>Candidate Countries Eurobarometer</td>
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<td>CEE</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFA</td>
<td>Confirmatory factor analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CZE</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EB</td>
<td>Standard Eurobarometer</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECSE</td>
<td>European Coal and Steel Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Exploratory factor analysis</td>
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<td>EFTA</td>
<td>European Free Trade Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMU</td>
<td>European Monetary Union</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<td>EPC</td>
<td>European Political Cooperation</td>
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<td>EPP</td>
<td>European People’s Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCS</td>
<td>Fully conditional specification</td>
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<td>FIML</td>
<td>Full information maximum likelihood</td>
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<td>FN</td>
<td>Footnote</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>Goodness of fit index</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUN</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<tr>
<td>LISREL</td>
<td>Linear structural relations</td>
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<td>LTU</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
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<tr>
<td>LVA</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAR</td>
<td>Missing at random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCAR</td>
<td>Missing completely at random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCMC</td>
<td>Markov chain Monte Carlo</td>
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<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Multiple imputation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Maximum likelihood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMAR</td>
<td>Not missing at random</td>
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14
OLS
P-close
PHARE
PJCC
POL
RMSEA
S.E.
SEM
SPSS
SVK
SVN
UK
USA
WLS

Ordinary least squares
p of close fit
Poland and Hungary Aid for Economic Restructuring
Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters
Poland
Root mean square error of approximation
Standard error
Structural equation modeling
Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
Slovakia
Slovenia
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Weighted least squares
1 Introduction

1.1 Approaching the subject

In May 2004, the European Union underwent one of its biggest changes in history. With the accession of eight Central and Eastern European countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia), Malta, and Cyprus, the EU took an important step in a process that became to be known as the EU’s eastern enlargement round. This accession is remarkable for two reasons: The expansion to the east is not only the largest expansion the EU has ever decided upon, increasing its population from 382 million to 456 million people, as well as the number of member states from 15 to 25. It is also remarkable because of its historic dimension: The entry of eight former communist countries to the prime example of Western integration projects can be seen as one crucial step of reuniting Europe after the end of the Cold War.

This accession posed challenges to the young democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). In 1993, the EU established a catalogue of criteria – the so-called Copenhagen criteria – which a country willing to join the EU must fulfill. For the post-communist countries, this meant that they had to undergo a successful transition process installing a stable democracy and market economy.

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1 The eastward enlargement posed challenges to the EU as well. The EU had to deal with the rising number as well as with the growing diversity of its member states, may it be regarding their economic, cultural, or historic traditions. To maintain its ability to act efficiently, the EU had to introduce several modifications to its institutional design and decision-making processes. The European Council of Nice in 2000 was held to address questions concerning the forthcoming enlargement and to ensure that the EU would be prepared for post-enlargement, e.g. by simplifying the weighting of the votes in the Council of the European Union, limiting the size of the European Commission and of the European Parliament and increasing the parliament’s competences by extending the co-decision procedure to further policy areas (Treaty of Nice 2001).

2 “The European Council today agreed that the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union. Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required. Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate’s ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union” (European Council 1993: 13).
EU membership was the impetus for political and economic changes at home. Of course, transition to democracy and market reforms were pursued for domestic reasons as well, like creating better living conditions and enhancing economic growth; nevertheless, the EU was undoubtedly an engine of these developments. Among the political elites in Central and Eastern European countries, the integration into the West, namely into NATO and the EU, was a widely shared goal and the fulfillment of the various requirements of membership was of high priority. Joining the EU was a means to guarantee democratic consolidation; it would make a return to authoritarian rule impossible – a lesson learnt from the Mediterranean enlargement when the young democracies Greece, Spain, and Portugal acceded to the EU in order to stabilize their newly won democratic regimes (Hix 2007b, Zielonka 2007a, on the Mediterranean enlargement see e.g. Tsoukalas 1981, Duchêne 1982, Wallace 1990).

The accession to the EU did not hit the Central and Eastern European countries out of the blue. Since the European Council in 1993 announced at its Copenhagen summit that the associate countries of Central and Eastern Europe should become members of the EU, these countries saw their futures within the EU. A long time of interaction between the EU and the candidate states preceded the eastward enlargement of the EU. During this period, there had been discussions and negotiations on the accession details and the future of an enlarged EU. The EU had also provided programs to support the ongoing economic and democratic transition in CEE in order to stabilize the individual countries and the region as a whole (for a detailed description of the accession process see e.g. Grabbe 2003, Beichelt 2004a, Dinan 2004, Zielonka 2007a, Berend 2009).

Thus, the prospective membership had been an issue within the Central and Eastern European countries since the 1990s. This issue became more and more important in the new century when in 2002, again in Copenhagen, the EU invited these countries (as well as Malta and Cyprus) to join its ranks. When in 2003 all eight post-communist countries held successful referendums on their EU membership, and the ‘old’ member states eventually agreed on the Treaty of Nice, which provided the structural prerequisites for the enlargement, the way was paved for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia to join the EU on May, the 1st 2004 (on the referendums see e.g. Szczerbiak/Taggart 2004).

The EU is something more than a mere international organization or a mere form of regional integration. Since the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) – i.e. since the founding of the European Union – it has been a kind of supranational political system working above nation-states. Framed as a multi-level system, the EU together with its member states co-determines policies within the nation-states, as well as within the EU (Kielmansegg 2003: 49-51, Holzinger 2005: 136-142, Hix 2007a, b, Jachtenfuchs 2007, Tümmler 2008: 261-262). Therefore, joining
such an entity is an important step for sovereign nation-states and their inhabitants, political elites and ordinary citizens alike. Competences in certain policy areas are transferred to the higher political level, thereby restricting the power and ability to act of national political elites. On the other hand, being a part of the Common Market and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is advantageous in economic and strategic respects. In addition, EU membership more directly affects ordinary citizens. For instance, European citizenship guarantees the right of free movement and residence throughout the EU or the freedom to apply to work throughout the EU (Treaty on European Union 2008), which can influence the daily lives of ordinary citizens more than abstract political or economic decisions and regulations.

In the opinions of most of the political elites in EU member states or candidate countries, the benefits of EU membership outweighs possible disadvantages. Consequently, an overall acceptance of European integration among the majority of political elites can be observed. That means representatives of the main parties in member states and candidate countries support the EU in general, and a withdrawal from membership or candidate status is not a realistic or expected option (Hooghe 2003: 296, Beichelt 2004b).

For a long time, ordinary citizens had agreed with the elites’ view. A so-called “permissive consensus” (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970: 41) characterized the attitudes of ordinary EU citizens. That meant people did not question the activities and decisions made by these elites even though they knew little about European integration and its consequences. Over the years, especially after the implementation of the Maastricht Treaty, this permissive consensus vanished. More and more citizens have adopted a critical view of the EU and support has gradually decreased (Niedermayer 1995a, Eichenberg/Dalton 2007). Since then, EU politicians and pro-European national politicians have struggled for their citizens’ support to follow through with further steps of integration. However, citizens’ support is essential for an EU that has changed from an elitist project to a system dependent on its citizens’ attitudes.

Since 1979, all European citizens have had the opportunity to participate in direct elections to the European Parliament (EP) every five years. But since no European government results from these elections and since the two main fractions in the EP, the European People’s Party (EPP) and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), frequently try to reach consensus, the citizens’ potential to influence European politics is rather limited. Also, given the EU’s current institutional design, the results of European elections have little influence on the direction of the EU. However, by voting for anti-European parties or by refusing to vote, voters can express their dislike of or their disinterest in the EU (Van der Eijk/Franklin 1996). Citizens’ influence is most significant and most visible in the referendums that various member states have held on certain Euro-

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Das Erstellen und Weitergeben von Kopien dieses PDFs ist nicht zulässig.
European issues like EU membership, new EU treaties, or the Euro. Up to today, eight out of a total of 22 referendums ever held in different member states have failed: While Greenland voted against further EU membership in 1982, all other failed referendums concerned the ratification of various treaties: the Maastricht Treaty in Denmark in 1992 (where a second referendum was successful), the Nice Treaty in Ireland in 2001 (where there was a second successful one, too), the Euro in Denmark (2000) and Sweden (2003), the Treaty establishing a European Constitution in the Netherlands and France in 2005, and the first referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland in 2008 (again, a successful second referendum was held in 2009). All these referendums are proof of the citizens’ power to stop or to hinder further European integration. Especially with regard to the referendums, it becomes clear that the EU is dependent on public support – like other democratic political systems. However, this holds especially true for the EU because its political framework is still open to changes – and institutional changes and improvements are often dependent on the results of the referendums. Therefore, it is not surprising that European integration is the issue most voted on in referendums worldwide (De Vreese/Semetko 2004: 4).

In addition to direct ways to influence on the EU via EP elections or referendums, indirect possibilities to affect the EU or European actors exist. For example, citizens can blame national politicians for bad and disadvantageous actions on the EU level which in turn influences the actions of these national politicians in subsequent EU negotiations. Sinnott states that research “strongly implies that domestic public opinion may impel or constrain moves towards internationalized governance” (Sinnott 1995: 29). All in all, public opinion should not be ignored by politicians having a say on the European level as they put their own approval ratings as well as the whole European regime at risk (Franklin et al. 1996, McLaren 2006: 10-12). Following political culture research, it can be argued that besides concrete decisions on particular European issues, it is the stability of the political regime itself that depends on the attitudes of its citizens (Almond/Verba 1965). Consequently, citizens’ support for the European regime is essential for further developments and a successful future for the EU.

3 In addition, there have been referendums in European countries that were not members of the EU at the time of the referendums. These referendums could not directly hinder further integration within the EU. There were six referendums in Switzerland, two in Liechtenstein, and two in Norway. But in the case of a successful referendum on a country’s future EU membership, the number of member states would increase, which in turn would influence the functioning and effectiveness of the EU. Ireland, Denmark, Austria, Finland, and Sweden held successful referendums on EU membership and – as said above - before the eastward enlargement, nine out of ten candidate countries (except for Cyprus) held such a referendum.
As only a small part of decisions made in the EU is legitimized by direct public support documented in a referendum, European and national political actors must ensure that they do not lose their citizens’ support while deepening and widening the EU. They risk outpacing European citizens if they push forward enormous steps of integration too quickly. Then, the chances of losing forthcoming EU-referendums become extremely high. Citizens could also punish their national politicians for unwanted EU politics in national elections. Thus, politicians have to make sure that a broad majority of people follow the line of integration and that there is no influential share of citizens able to boycott the supranational system putting the European regime at risk.

In a nutshell, attitudes towards the EU are essential for the development of the EU and are especially relevant in times of big changes. One of the biggest changes in the history of the European Union (or even the European continent in the young 21st century) is the eastward enlargement of the EU in May 2004. Before this sea change could happen, the EU had to make sure that the citizens in the EU and the candidate countries would support the enlargement because this event was dependent on several referendums. Ireland was the only ‘old’ member state to call for a referendum on the Treaty of Nice, which launched the institutional reforms necessary to handle eastward enlargement. To the surprise of the Irish government, the Irish voters for the first time ever rejected an EU treaty. This shows that politicians can never be sure about the outcome of a European referendum and that people have their own opinions towards European issues. When the Irish government repeated the referendum one year later, in 2002, and the voters accepted the Nice Treaty, the last step to the implementation of the treaty was taken, but it had been a painful struggle and had proven the power of the citizens. After the EU had made its institutions fit for the biggest enlargement in its history, referendums on EU membership were held in every single candidate country (except for Cyprus) in 2003. Thus, the people in the candidate states had the chance to decide on their country’s membership in the EU. All referendums were successful: In each state, except for Malta, more than two thirds of the voters agreed to join the EU.

This example shows that even before joining the EU, Central and Eastern Europeans had the chance to decide on a European issue highlighting the importance of citizens’ attitudes towards the EU in this region. The results of the referendums confirm that Central and Eastern Europeans had a positive picture of the EU and took a leap of faith in the EU before the accession. Nevertheless, as has been stated before, like every other political system, the EU relies on continuous support and acceptance of its citizens. The crucial question is whether the Central and Eastern Europeans continue to support the EU after gaining membership. Therefore, studying the level and development of support for the EU in CEE before and after the eastward enlargement provides us with infor-
mation about the Central and Eastern Europeans’ relationship with the EU, and gives hints about further support for this supranational system and indirectly about the stability of the EU.

A follow-up question is upon what grounds this support is based. Central and Eastern Europeans are new EU citizens. They were not socialized in that system. They had to struggle with domestic issues – transition to democracy and market reforms – that greatly influenced their lives, their living conditions, their way of thinking about politics and economics. The EU – by its nature – is a remote, distant, and complex system, and if citizens lack experience with such a system, the impression of the EU as remote and complicated is reinforced. Against such a background, it is unlikely that support for the EU can rely only on opinions about the system itself or parts of it. Rather, to form opinions under difficult circumstances, citizens need help because they do not have enough information to form opinions as cognitive psychological research states. They need cognitive heuristics or judgmental shortcuts, i.e. political considerations or values stored in long-term memory which can be used to evaluate new or unknown objects (Anderson 1998, Lupia et al. 2000a, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Thus, what could be usable and meaningful heuristics for the evaluation of the EU? According to current research dealing with the post-Maastricht situation, common shortcuts are attitudes towards aspects of the domestic arena (Anderson 1998, Hooghe/Marks 2005). It is assumed that in the broad range of politics awareness of the national system and its various parts is higher than awareness of other, more remote systems such as the EU. As a result, the stored information about national politics is usually higher as well. Such information is quite easily accessible and it is relatively simple to understand when compared to information about the EU. Furthermore, citizens are aware of the connection between the nation-states and the EU, the two political levels organized in a multi-level system. To put it simply, in the view of ordinary citizens, the EU is a political construct made up by some European countries. It is established above the nation-states and is governed by leading national politicians as well as parliamentarians who are elected to the EP in nationwide elections. If national attitudes are relevant in explaining EU support, the attitude structure that underlies EU support, which would include national attitudes as determinants of EU support, might be complex. There is a need to combine research on attitudes towards the European Union and research on cognitive psychology to describe the opinion formation process that precedes the evaluation of the EU and to explain support for the EU in CEE.

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of the opinion formation and the attitude structure of Central and Eastern European citizens which underlie support for the European Union. In doing so, this study puts a special emphasis on the role of cognitive heuristics in the opinion formation process. It uses standard approaches from EU research as well as cognitive psychological re-

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search in order to specify a new model explaining support for the EU in CEE in the period around EU accession.4

1.2 Shortcomings in current research

Despite considerable research on attitudes towards the EU in CEE, from the perspective of comparative politics several theoretical and empirical deficits can be detected.5 Looking at the literature on attitudes towards the EU in CEE, a confusing picture regarding theory-building occurs. There seems to be no agreement on relevant determinants of EU support. One dissent is obvious in particular: Should the CEE region be treated as a region completely different from the rest of Europe? That would lead to region-specific, non-transferable context hypotheses. Or should the region, which is now to a considerable extent a part of the EU, be treated as any other EU region, which would lead to very general hypotheses? Most authors argue that existing theoretical approaches for explaining EU support developed in the Western context should be examined for their applicability in the CEE context (e.g. Cichowski 2000: 1247, Ehin 2001: 36-37, Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 187). However, the problem is that a shortcoming concerning theory-building is inherent in many studies on attitudes towards the EU even if the Western context is examined. The question of what determinants are relevant is often not guided by considerations which lead to a consistent model trying to combine the determinants systematically (Fuchs/Schlenker 2006: 4, exceptions are Rohrschneider 2002, Fuchs 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Rather, theoretical considerations are limited to identifying one or more relevant determinants without further discussing the relationship between different determinants and without further specifying their relationship with the dependent variable. To my knowledge, a coherent model does not exist to explain support for the EU in CEE by including relevant factors from traditional EU and CEE research, and at the same time accounting for the role, position, and relationship of these different factors in a model of EU support.

4 Research on public opinion about the EU is often studied under the headline ‘Euroscepticism’. This negatively connoted term usually describes a critical view on or opposition to the EU or European integration by citizens or parties (e.g. Kopecký/Mudde 2002, Taggart/Szczesniak 2004a, b, Hooghe/Marks 2007, Fuchs et al. 2009). Therefore, it just describes the opposite of support for the EU. Throughout this work, I permanently use the positive connoted term of EU support for consistency reasons. However, the determinants of EU support identified in this work are, of course, determinants of Euroskepticism as well.

5 For a similar structural approach to systemize the shortcomings in research and the consequences from these shortcomings cf. Rudi (2010: 20-30).
A further problem that frequently occurs in EU research is the failure to account for the ignorance of the citizens’ relationship to and their comprehension of the EU. For ordinary citizens who are generally not very interested in politics, the EU is a remote and complex system and interest in and knowledge of this system is comparatively low. Therefore, some proposed hypotheses are too demanding: They overestimate the existence of certain attitudes as well as the ordinary citizen’s ability to form opinions and draw conclusions concerning the European context. However, there is a strand of research which recognizes these unrealistic assumptions. It refers to cognitive psychological findings and points out the relevance of judgmental shortcuts in explaining EU support (e.g. Anderson 1998, Fuchs 2003, Tverdova/Anderson 2004, Hooghe/Marks 2005). But these attempts do not come up with a coherent model for the CEE context.

A last point, which is not a mere theoretical shortcoming, but which touches on empirical realization, concerns the temporal and spatial dimension of existing studies. Most studies cover a point in time before the CEE countries became members of the EU. Needless to say, this is because of the temporal proximity of the accession. Even if it is plausible that relevant determinants of support, elaborated on before the accession, continue to be relevant after the accession as well, there is a need to re-examine the theoretical approaches. Membership can change attitudes towards the EU in any context because with increasing experience with the EU, more opinions and different opinions about the EU may develop; in turn, that may alter the relevant determinants of EU support. With reference to the CEE context, transition to democracy and the introduction of market economies become more and more temporally distant events. As a consequence of the changing environment, general political attitudes may change as well. To get an overall picture of the situation in CEE it is both useful and necessary to survey support for the EU cross-temporally – before and, more importantly, after the EU accession.

Regarding the spatial scope of studies on EU support in CEE, the range of countries included varies, and studies covering all CEE countries are rare. Many studies concentrate either on one country, with Poland being the most frequently studied case, or on a limited number of countries, e.g. the Visegrad group comprising the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia (Fidrmuc/Doyle 2005).6 The problem is that political research is generally interested in developing and confirming general hypotheses. To test such hypotheses, a broad and meaningful selection of countries is needed for the empirical examination because the validity of most hypotheses or theories in social sciences is dependent

6 The Visegrad group is an alliance of the above mentioned countries for the purpose of commonly solving problems and furthering integration to the West.
on context (Scharpf 2000: 357). Therefore, if testing general statements in all countries is not possible or reasonable (e.g. because of data problems), the researcher should either find good theoretical reasons for selecting certain countries or rely on established designs for selecting countries (cf. Przeworski/Teune 1970, King et al. 1994). The post-communist countries in CEE, which are now EU member states, are characterized by several similarities: the socialist heritage, political and economic transformation, or former Soviet influence. However, several differences also exist: the level of economic development, the type of transformation, the proximity to the pre-2004 EU boarder, and historic links to the countries that formed the EU-15 (e.g. the Habsburg Empire). General theories cannot be tested sufficiently and valid inferences cannot be drawn by using single-case studies or small groups of homogeneous countries. Nevertheless, inferences are often drawn in studies with a country selection not adequate for this purpose.

In addition to theoretical or ‘practical’ shortcomings, further criticism concerns the methods of the empirical analyses. Firstly, some studies use aggregate data even if they are interested in the individual motives of EU support (see e.g. Gabel/Palmer 1995, Anderson/Reichert 1996, Gabel 1998c). These studies do not achieve the proposed aim because of a possible ecological fallacy. Secondly, the relationship between various determinants of EU support may be complex, so normal regression models are not the appropriate statistical method. Structural equation models – an adequate method to describe complex causal chains – are seldom applied (exceptions are e.g. Christin/Trechsel 2002, Wessels 2007, studying the attitudes towards the Euro: Pepermans/Verleye 1998, Maier et al. 2003). Some results must be questioned as they simplify the relationships between the determinants, as well as between determinants and EU support by simply neglecting possible mediator or moderator effects.

The last defect concerns the handling of missing values. Missing values are highly problematic if the data basis used is survey data from CEE. The popular method of simply excluding cases with at least one missing value (listwise deletion), will lead to a drastic reduction in the number of cases and result in inefficient and sometimes biased estimates (Allison 2002: 6-8). Many authors do not indicate how they handle missing values. If such a description is omitted, presumably they use listwise deletion. Multiple imputation, an alternative to listwise deletion, is not used on a regular basis in studies on attitudes towards the EU in CEE.
The goal of this study is to describe and explain the formation of generalized support for the EU in CEE, along with the corresponding underlying attitude structure in the period around the accession. The generalized support for the EU that I examine is the support for the EU as a political regime, i.e. the EU in its structurally implemented form in general. I am not interested in explaining support for more specific parts of a regime or for other aspects of European integration, like support for certain institutions or certain policies. Furthermore, the focus is explicitly on the role, position, and importance of national attitudes, which serve as judgmental shortcuts in this attitude structure.

The central research question is: What attitudes – and especially, what national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics – explain generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe? Or to put it in another way: What factors make up the attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE?

The formulated research question undoubtedly is an empirical question. However, to answer such a question, theoretical considerations must be addressed first. I will elaborate on the attitudes that have the potential to influence support for a political regime in general, then I will concentrate on additional determinants resulting from the special nature of the EU, namely its connection with the nation-states within a complex multi-level structure and its distance to the people. These additional determinants are attitudes towards the nation-state and have a specific role and position in a model explaining EU support. From research on EU support I will deduce that national attitudes might serve as shortcuts. With reference to cognitive psychological findings on opinion formation I will determine what specific national attitudes serve as shortcuts and how they are arranged in a model of EU support. I will develop a model that accounts for the assumed relationship between national and EU attitudes. The theoretical considerations are made to clarify the role and position of relevant determinants of EU support in order to eventually design a model representing the attitude structure underlying EU support. While using an established framework and research from Western European countries as a starting point for my theoretical considerations, I will focus on CEE countries and develop a model of support for the EU suitable for this region.

As I concentrate on new EU member states, it is a logical consequence that temporal distinctiveness will have to be examined as well. The model to be developed has to take into account the temporal proximity of the countries’ accession to the EU. This important but exceptional period of time can be separated into three time spans: Firstly, the months before the accession including the people’s first intensive contact with the EU in the referendums held on EU member-
ship. Secondly, the period following the accession, i.e. the first months as new EU members. And thirdly, the beginning of the daily routine in the EU which starts several months after the accession, when experience with the EU could have grown and membership could have become ‘normal’. It is assumed that the relevance or explanatory power of different determinants of support varies depending on the observed period of time. As experience with the EU increases, the role of heuristics may change. This leads to a follow-up research question: Does the relevance of single determinants of generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe – and the relevance of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in particular – change in the course of time? Or more precisely: Are there differences concerning the explanatory power of single determinants – and of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in particular – shortly before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and after years of EU membership?

Due to the fact that heuristics are a focal point in my theoretical considerations and above all in the structure of my model of support, another series of question arises: Who uses these heuristics? Are they used by all citizens at all points in time? Do some people use them more than others? To channel these thoughts, I use the so-called ‘heterogeneity assumption’ as a starting point for my considerations. This assumption says that “[p]eople make up their minds in different ways” (Sniderman et al. 1991: 8). Used in my context, this means, that it is likely that certain determinants of support are of different importance for different people. An obvious example is that attitudes towards the nation-state may be especially relevant for citizens who are not familiar with the European system, while citizens who are well aware of European affairs rely less on those aspects. According to this argument, it is the use of heuristics in particular that differs between individuals. This is due to the fact that people differ regarding their level of information about the EU and the experience they make with the EU. Technically speaking, this distinction, which can be summarized as ‘political sophistication regarding the EU’, works as a moderator variable. This means that the level of political sophistication influences the relevance of various determinants explaining EU support. This leads us to two further research questions: Does the influence of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics on generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe vary depending on the citizens’ level of political sophistication? When deducing the research question on the temporal dependence of the attitude structure, it is assumed that the use of heuristics changes over time. Combining this assumption with the reflections on the influence of sophistication, it is worth studying the effect of political sophistication in the three different time periods outlined above. This leads to the second question concerning the role of political sophistication: Are there differences concerning the influence of national attitudes serving as...
cognitive heuristics in the periods shortly before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and after years of EU membership that depend on the citizens’ level of political sophistication?

Combining the outlined questions, the objective of this study can be summarized as follows: To describe and explain the formation of generalized support for the EU in CEE, and the corresponding underlying attitude structure shortly before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and years after EU membership across the population as a whole, and additionally across the population differentiated by its level of political sophistication.7

1.4 State of the art

1.4.1 Support for the European Union

In political science support for a political system is very much connected with the name of David Easton. In his seminal works dating from the 1960s he developed an analytical framework to study support for a political system (Easton 1965, 1967). Since then his technical terms and theoretical thoughts form the basis of any kind of analysis of political support. According to Easton support is “an attitude by which a person orients himself to an object either favorably or unfavorably, positively or negatively” (Easton 1975: 436). He highlights that support for a system is an important determinant of stability – or in his technical term ‘persistence’ – of a system (Easton 1965: 475). Therefore, the theoretical significance of the concept of political support is to be found on the macro-level. However, support cannot be defined and identified meaningfully as a characteristic of a political system. Rather, support is an aggregation of attitudes which can

7 One general remark about the use of the terms ‘attitude’ and ‘opinion’ in this study: The terms are not used consistently in the literature. Their understanding and the frequency of their application differ between different research traditions and fields of interest. For example, in research on support, the term attitude is predominant; in research on information processing the term opinion prevails. To make it more complicated, the term public opinion is often used to refer to mass political attitudes mixing up both words. The difference in the meaning of both terms is small. What one can say is that generally attitudes have an evaluative aspect, which is not necessarily part of an opinion (Tourangeau/Galesic 2008). However, in this study both terms are used to be able to employ the exact wordings used in the different fields of interests I refer to. I use the terms almost interchangeably when talking generally about attitudes or opinions. But when I refer to my model, which is an attitude model, I predominantly use this formulation to point to the fact that the model consists of attitudes, i.e. evaluations, and that it depicts the attitude structure underlying EU support. In contrast, when elaborating on the opinion formation process, I rely on the word opinion as it is part of this fixed term.
be identified and measured on the micro-level (Fuchs 1989: 5, Pollack et al. 2006: 11-12). If support is seen in that way, Easton’s concept can be connected to the research of Almond and Verba who devised the concept of political culture. Within their approach they state that the congruence of system structure and system culture, the latter defined as “the distributions of attitudes toward the national community, the regime, and the authorities” (Almond 1996: 28), is a requirement for the persistence of a system (Almond/Verba 1965, for a discussion of this proposition see e.g. Dalton 2000, Fuchs 2007c, for empirical studies on this relation see e.g. Muller/Seligson 1994, Inglehart 1988, Klingemann/Fuchs 1998, Inglehart/Welzel 2003, Dalton 2004).

Support is an attitude of individuals and thus a socio-psychological concept, which can be caught with socio-psychological instruments (Fuchs 1989: 21). Understanding support in that way, studies dealing with public opinion about the EU make up the current state of research, which becomes relevant for theory-building. Therefore, in order to answer the research questions and to follow the objective of this study, I embed my theoretical considerations into the current state of research on support for the EU. The following paragraphs systematically summarize the main approaches in explaining EU support. The aim is to identify relevant cross-temporal and cross-national determinants of EU support by analyzing well-conducted comparative studies (as well as some useful single-case studies) with regard to empirically confirmed determinants. At this point, this summary is restricted to a mere listing of the main findings; an intensive discussion of the determinants, which are relevant for my study, will be undertaken in the theoretical part of this work.

I will first deal with general approaches developed against the background of the EU-15, i.e. the Western member states. Secondly, I will describe the main approaches used in the Central and Eastern European context. Thirdly, I will concentrate on existing research on attitude structures underlying EU support. Finally, I will explicate the consequences that follow from the presented state of the art and the identified shortcomings in order to clarify how this study goes beyond current research with regard to theory-building and methods used.

1.4.2 Approaches to the study of support for the European Union in the Western context

The broad and intensive research on support for the European Union in Western member states can be used as a point of departure for theory-building in the CEE
Approaches developed in the course of European integration can be transferred to the new context to a certain extent as “there is little theoretical or empirical reason to believe that the fundamental factors driving mass opinions about the EU as an object would be completely dissimilar in East and West” (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 187, empirical confirmation: Fidrmuc/Doyle 2005). This makes a discussion of findings in the Western context an appropriate and necessary starting point for further theoretical considerations.

The implementation of the Maastricht Treaty, which marked a new step in European integration, was followed by intensive research on attitudes towards the EU. The role of the citizens’ attitudes in the process of European integration eventually was taken up by many authors dealing with the deepening or widening of the EU. The majority of theoretical and empirical studies in one way or the other focused on the broad topic of support for the EU. Besides descriptions of the level and the temporal development of support in the whole EU or single member states, the explanation of support took center stage. This includes support for the integration process in general, the concrete implementation of the European political system, European institutions, specific policies like immigration, the European Monetary Union (EMU), or the CFSP – whereby the determinants for one or the other kind of support are similar. Although my study concentrates on regime support, i.e. support for the EU as a political regime as a whole, the description of the state of the art includes findings from studies dealing with slightly different dependent variables as well. This is due to the fact that these studies can contribute to the identification of relevant determinants of generalized EU support in almost the same manner. The main research question in many studies is the general question on the determinants of support, i.e. support is influenced by which factors. However, despite the immense research, no consistent or uniform answer has been found to that question, and various explanations of support coexist in the literature (Hooghe/Marks 2005).

To structure these manifold explanations or determinants, different approaches explaining EU support have been identified and classified (cf. e.g. among many others Gabel 1998c, Cichowski 2000, Hooghe/Marks 2005, McLaren 2006). Nevertheless, even these broad categories differ from author to author, and different systematizations continue to exist. In the following paragraph I will shortly describe different approaches that I have identified as the most relevant, and classify the relevant determinants of support into these approaches.

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8 I do not use the term ‘Western’ in a strict geographical sense. It broadly encompasses all European countries which were members of the EU before 2004. Therefore, the description covers the former EU-15. In the scientific literature and media these member states are often labeled as ‘old’ or ‘established’ member states to distinguish them from the ‘new’ member states that joined the EU in May 2004.
Following the extensive research on public opinion on the EU in Western European countries, one can distinguish between strands dealing directly with various aspects of the EU and strands dealing with opinion formation in general. Within the first strand, primarily three approaches can be distinguished: (1) an approach focusing on utilitarian, instrumental factors; (2) an approach dealing with value-based factors; (3) an approach embracing identity factors (similar trichotomies can be found in Hooghe/Marks 2005, McLaren 2002, 2006, Lubbers 2008, Schoen 2008, for a systematic review of approaches of public opinion on European integration see Hooghe/Marks 2005, which includes a meta-analysis, see as well various chapters in Niedermayer/Sinnott 1995a). Within the second strand, all approaches are subsumed which identify determinants of support from a cognitive or social psychological perspective so that these determinants do not directly deal with the EU (this systematization roughly follows the systematization by Hooghe/Marks 2005).9

Utilitarian models state that citizens evaluate the EU according to cost-benefit ratios; hence, in EU research the term utilitarian is simply used to address the economic calculus that underlies public opinion on European integration (McLaren 2002, Hooghe/Marks 2007). Citizens assess real or perceived costs or losses as well as benefits or gains from European integration according to their influence on the national economy (sociotropic view) or on their own pocketbook (egocentric view), with the sociotropic view being more influential in opinion formation (Norpoth 1996, Harper 2000, Fölsz/Tóka 2006). If citizens perceive benefits or gains, they will tend to support European integration; if they perceive costs or losses, they will tend to oppose integration (Gabel/Palmer 1995, Anderson 1998, Carey 2002, Rohrschneider 2002, Fuchs 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Besides the importance of such instrumental orientations, various studies found that objective individual characteristics, like the occupational status, the level of income, and the proximity of the residence to the border, influence the level of support (Gabel/Palmer 1995, Anderson/Reichert 1996, Gabel 1998a, b, c, McLaren 2002, Diez Medrano 2003). Citizens who are better equipped to benefit from the liberalization of the European market favor deeper (economic) integration. Likewise, macro-level characteristics, like the intensity of trade with other EU countries (Eichenberg/Dalton 1993, Anderson/Reichert 1996, Gabel 1998a), a country’s status as net contributor or beneficiary (Ander-

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9 The two strands are not isolated categories because determinants listed under the heading of the second strand could be subsumed under an approach from the first strand. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether a determinant is directly related to the EU (then it would be part of the first strand) or whether it is not directly related to the EU and is therefore a shortcut. For example, various political values are treated either as determinants related to the EU or as shortcuts (cf. Rohrschneider 2002, Hooghe/Marks 2005).
son/Reichert 1996, Brinegar/Jolly 2005), the type of welfare state (Brinegar/Jolly 2005, Hooghe/Marks 2005), or general national economic conditions (e.g. GDP, inflation, or unemployment) (Eichenberg/Dalton 1993, Diez Medrano 2003), have been found to be responsible for aggregate-level differences in EU support.

Besides utilitarian factors, which emerged as important and cross-temporal as well as cross-spatial robust determinants of support, another bundle of factors was studied in the wake of Maastricht. With the establishment of an explicit political dimension of the EU, citizens are likely to evaluate the European integration from a value-based perspective. Positive orientations towards the European political system and its political institutions affect support for the EU: specifically, satisfaction with European democracy (Rohrschneider 2002, Fuchs 2003, Karp/Bowler 2006), confidence in European institutions (Sanchez-Cuenca 2000, Karp et al. 2003, Karp/Bowler 2006, McLaren 2007), or the perception of the representational qualities of the EU (Rohrschneider 2002, Fuchs 2003). Beyond these clearly political values, other value-based orientations are influential. Back in the 1970s, Inglehart showed that post-materialist values go hand-in-hand with support for European integration, which was recently confirmed by other authors (Inglehart 1971, cf. Anderson/Reichert 1996, Gabel 1998c, Rohrschneider 2002). Moreover, religious orientations are associated with EU support in such a way that Catholics show higher EU support than Protestants (Nelsen et al. 2001). Díez Medrano studied this relationship on the aggregate-level and came to the conclusion that Catholic countries show higher support (2003).

A third approach explains EU support by European citizens’ attitudes towards the European community. This approach encompasses, first and foremost, the citizens’ commitment to this community, i.e. the identification with the European community, which is also referred to as European identity. It is shown that pride to be European or a felt attachment with Europe is positively related to EU support (Marks 1999, Diez Medrano/Gutiérrez 2001, Carey 2002, Diez Medrano 2003). However, as European identity is closely connected to national identity, with the latter being the identification with one’s own national community, the interaction between both identities influences EU support as well. Whether national identity reinforces or impedes EU support depends on the ‘nature’ of national identity. National identity can be negatively related to EU support (Carey 2002, Christin/Trechsel 2002), but it does not necessarily contradict it; only if national identity hinders the association with further territorial identities does it negatively affect EU support (Hooghe/Marks 2005, McLaren 2007).

Beyond research on individual-level support, the term ‘attachment to the nation-state’ is sometimes used to describe macro-level factors measuring the strength of national identity or national feelings. This deals with national traditions, like the length of EU membership or the founding of a sovereign state. These determinants can account for country-level differences in EU support: a
long EU membership or a short period as a sovereign state is associated with higher aggregate-level EU support (Eichenberg/Dalton 1993, Anderson/Reichert 1996, Kaltenthaler/Anderson 2001).

Within the identity approach, a further determinant of EU support on the individual level is discussed: The perceived cultural threats from other cultures, which include threats to the way of life, national identity, or language. If citizens feel threatened by European integration in one way or another, this leads to opposition to the EU (Carey 2002, McLaren 2002, Díez Medrano 2003, De Vreese/Boomgaarden 2005).

In addition to these approaches, which incorporate factors directly related to European integration, another bunch of possible determinants has been developed against the background of research on cognitive psychology. The underlying assumption is that the existing models explaining EU support were too demanding – the utilitarian model in particular. Because European integration is a complex process and the EU a remote and complex system, it is rather unlikely that ordinary citizens are able to evaluate the EU in regard to its perceived benefits or its democratic functioning. A newer research tradition accounts for the remote and complex character of the EU and states that support is influenced by aspects not directly connected to the EU. This research is sometimes labeled ‘political cues-approach’ or ‘proxy-approach’, both sharing an underlying intention: They describe how citizens use various cues, proxies, heuristics, or shortcuts – or what the used term may be – to evaluate new or complex issues. These shortcuts are necessary to form an opinion. With reference to the opinion formation on the EU, shortcuts related to the national political sphere play a crucial role in explaining EU support. A party cue, adopting a party’s position on the EU, is said to be relevant. Party support in various specifications, like support for established parties, for governing parties, or for parties supporting the EU, is associated with EU support (Franklin et al. 1994, Anderson 1998, Steenbergen/Jones 2002, Ray 2003b, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Another shortcut from the national sphere, which is said to determine EU support, is attitudes towards the national system in general (Anderson 1998, Sanchez-Cuenca 2000, Rohrschneider 2002, Kritzinger 2003) or the national government (Franklin et al. 1995, Gabel 1998c, Sanchez-Cuenca 2000, Ray 2003a). A possible shortcut in the EU context, which is more uncoupled from palpable national politics but which also stems from the domestic arena, is ideology, or more precisely, the citizen’s self-placement on the left-right scale. In the Western context and especially among the original six member states, the citizens’ self-description as left or support for left parties is associated with opposition to the EU (Wessels 1995a, Gabel 1998c, McLaren 2002, Brinegar/Jolly 2005). Additionally, the above discussed factor – post-materialist values – is seen as the same kind of shortcut and can be placed in this category as well (Hooghe/Marks 2005).
A further strand of research bearing no direct relation to European integration focuses on the cognitive resources of citizens. It is argued that citizens who are better equipped to understand integration and who are able to see and utilize advantages resulting from integration for themselves or their country tend to support the EU. Determinants like the level of formal education (Inglehart 1970, Gabel/Palmer 1995, Anderson/Reichert 1996, Gabel 1998c), the level of cognitive mobilization (Inglehart 1970, 1977, Janssen 1991, Gabel 1998c), which is also included under the headings opinion leadership (Steenbergen/Jones 2002), political interest (Carey 2002), or political knowledge (Sinnott 1997, Karp et al. 2003, Wessels 2007) influence the attitudes towards the EU.

1.4.3 Approaches to the study of support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

Literature dealing with attitudes towards the EU in Central and Eastern European countries ties in with the approaches outlined above. There are manifold empirical studies covering the period between the end of communism and the accession to the EU. Because of the recentness of the entry, studies covering the period after the accession to the EU are rare. The following paragraph summarizes the empirical findings concerning determinants of support for the EU in CEE. With reference to the different approaches identified in the Western context, I will examine the relevant determinants of support in the CEE context. Additionally, I will study the literature for context-specific determinants.

As in the Western context, utilitarian models contribute considerably to explaining support. Citizens who feel economically better off or who expect that they or their country will benefit from the new realities in Europe tend to support European integration (Cichowski 2000, Ehin 2001, Slomczynski/Shabad 2003, Tverdova/Anderson 2004, Jacobs/Pollack 2006, Kopec ký/Holsteyn 2006, Whitefield et al. 2006, Tilley/Garry 2007). Specifically, citizens who have benefited from transition processes or citizens who think their economic situations have improved since the transition from communism (i.e. those who are called “transitional winners” by Tucker et al. (2002: 557)) support integration (Tucker et al. 2002, Christin 2005). Studies with a macro-level perspective show that poor economic performance (e.g. low GDP, high inflation) can be associated with higher EU support as well (Christin 2005, Tilley/Garry 2007).

The political values approach has to be seen against the background of the recent transition to democracy and market reforms in the CEE countries. Generally, these sea changes dominate political thinking and are reflected in the thinking about the EU as well. This means, first and foremost, general political values that are only loosely connected to the EU are relevant in explaining EU support,
which nearly makes the political values approach a subdivision of the shortcuts strand. In the CEE context, some political values can be shortcuts at the same time. I discuss such hybrid determinants at this point because Central and Eastern Europeans see these value-based factors so closely tied to the EU that this classification is justified. Firstly, citizens who favor democratic principles (instead of socialist ideas) and transition to democracy (Pickel 2003, Christin 2005, Jacobs/Pollack 2006, but see Ehin 2001) or who are satisfied with their country’s democratic development (Cichowski 2000, Slomczynski/Shabad 2003, Christin 2005, Jasiewicz 2006, but see Tverdova/Anderson 2004, Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006) support European integration. Secondly, citizens who favor the free market and approve the economic reforms that their countries have implemented, favor the EU as a political actor that defends this economic model (Berglund et al. 1995, Cichowski 2000, Tucker et al. 2002, Slomczynski/Shabad 2003, Caplanova et al. 2004, Tverdova/Anderson 2004, Christin 2005, Jacobs/Pollack 2006, Jasiewicz 2006). This highlights, other than the expected impact of monetary or material benefits, that European integration is evaluated in view of underlying economic values (Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006b, Tilley/Garry 2007). In addition, newer studies document the influence of value-based attitudes towards European political actors on EU support (Tanasoiu/Colonescu 2008).

The role of the most important determinants within the identity approach is similar to those in the Western context. European identity positively correlates with support for the EU (Pickel 2003, on the aggregate level: Wessels 2007). It generally does not conflict with national identity; rather, both identities are compatible (Pollack 2002, Ruiz Jiménez et al. 2004). Only if national identity “is closed-minded and turned towards regionalism and local traditions” (Pollack 2002: 5), will it stand in contrast with European values and European integration. If national identity is not biased in that way, it accounts for support for the EU. Central and Eastern Europeans who identify strongly with their own nation tend to support the EU because they assume that their national interests are better secured within a larger entity. The catchphrase ‘returning to Europe’ adequately describes the Central and Eastern Europeans’ feeling of belonging to the European family without giving up national attachments (Agh 1998: 3, Whitefield et al. 2006: 187-189, Zielonka 2007a: 23-43). Another context-specific finding, which points in the same direction, is that citizens who have positive attitudes towards countries outside their own region and who want their country linked with other countries support European integration (Tverdova/Anderson 2004).

Judgmental shortcuts resulting from the national sphere play a crucial role in the context of new member states since Central and Eastern Europeans do not possess much experience with the EU. Party cues turn out to be relevant in CEE,
but only in one way: the party’s position on EU membership is decisive. This
means that supporters of a party that has approved EU membership are willing to
approve membership as well. The distinction between parties according to the
left-right-dimension or the distinction between established and new parties has
no influence on EU support (Cichowski 2000, Tverdova/Anderson 2004). Two
other important shortcuts stemming from the national sphere have already been
explained above, as they are both values and shortcuts: attitudes towards the new
national democratic system and attitudes towards the new national market econ-
omy. I previously discussed these attitudes within the value-approach because
they are values that are directly linked to the EU by Central and Eastern Europe-
ans even if they are actually more general values. Because of their general nature
these values can be interpreted as important shortcuts as well. Hence, satisfaction
with the development or condition of the nation-state influences the thinking
about the EU. Other shortcuts from the national sphere, including trust in the na-
tional government (Ehin 2001), or more generally, satisfaction with the democ-
ratic institutions (Whitefield et al. 2006), lead to EU support.

Analogue to findings in the Western countries, citizens in CEE differ in terms
of their cognitive resources. Formal education, which is studied the most, is
found to exert a positive effect on EU support (Cichowski 2000, Caplanova et al.
2004, but see Tucker et al. 2002). Beyond that, more politically aware (Berglund
et al. 1995) or more politically engaged (Whitefield et al. 2006) citizens support
integration to a higher extent than those with low levels of awareness or en-
gagement.

To conclude, the relevant explanatory factors for EU support in Central and
Eastern Europe can be categorized under broad approaches known from the
Western European context. Overall, the relevant determinants of EU support are
similar in both contexts. The main difference can be seen in the comparatively
important position of value-based determinants in various models explaining EU
support in CEE. While instrumental thinking seems to dominate the evaluation
of the EU in Western countries, in the CEE context instrumental as well as val-
ue-based determinants seem to be relevant in explaining support – a finding con-
firmed cross-temporally and cross-nationally (Jacobs/Pollack 2006, Rohrschnei-
der/Whitefield 2006a, b).

In addition to this classification in terms of content, the determinants of EU sup-
port analyzed in existing theory-driven empirical studies can be classified ac-
cording to their type. When inspecting the most important determinants of EU
support, one can first broadly distinguish between macro-level factors (e.g. GDP,
length of EU membership) and micro-level factors. The latter can be further sepa-
rated into attitudes (e.g. evaluation of the economic situation or identification
with a political community) and objective individual factors (e.g. education). For
this study, it is necessary and useful to focus on one type of determinants. As the main interest here is in analyzing the opinion formation and attitude structure underlying EU support, the focus is on the attitudes of citizens. That means I am not interested in determinants comprising objective characteristics or macro-level variables. Rather, my research is concentrated on opinion formation and on theory-driven empirical studies dealing with attitudes as determinants of support. Furthermore, I am interested in the attitude structure of citizens living in a relatively homogenous region so I am not concerned with country-specific determinants since I do not expect great variance in many macro-political figures in that region.

Far from denying the relevance of these excluded factors in explaining EU support, from a theoretical point of view, it can be argued that while these factors can influence opinion formation as well as attitude structures as a whole, they have a somewhat preceding position in the process of opinion formation.

Therefore, I consider objective individual factors and macro-level factors as background variables, which generally affect opinion formation only. By contrast, I focus directly on the attitude structure and what this structure looks like according to cognitive psychological assumptions. In general, factors determining attitudes as well as the attitude structure underlying EU support are not of interest and will not be examined as a consequence. Instead, the focus will be on relevant attitudes connected to EU support only. This approach is justified as I am not aiming to define all relevant factors that would explain EU support; rather, my main concern is on relevant attitudes – especially those serving as shortcuts – and their role, position, and relations to each other in the attitude structure underlying EU support.

1.4.4 Attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

This short overview of EU-related empirical studies showed that research on determinants of EU support is quite extensive. It has already been outlined that my focus is on the attitude structure underlying EU support. Therefore, except for possible single determinants of EU support, research on the role and position of these determinants as well as their relations to each other in a model of EU support is relevant for building a theoretical model. As has been stated before, there is a lack of such studies as many of those dealing with EU support simply test single or multiple determinants without thinking of a coherent theoretical model. There are a few exceptions, however, which are relevant and useful starting points for my research.

The most important study was introduced by Fuchs (2003). He developed a model of support for the EU as a regime, i.e. for the EU’s general institutional
setting – the dependent variable that interests me as well. His attitude model includes determinants regarded as relevant in the literature on support for political regimes in general and in specific literature on the EU. He specifies EU-specific utilitarian and value-based determinants, as well as European identity. Moreover, he integrates national attitudes as judgmental shortcuts. In his model these national attitudes have a preceding position, which means that there is a causal chain from national attitudes to specific EU attitudes to EU support. Therefore, his model is especially suitable for my theory-building as it systematically describes relevant determinants, their position, and relationships in the model, and it acknowledges the relevance of shortcuts in the European context. In turn, Fuchs’ model is influenced by Rohrschneider’s model of support for a European government (2002) – a model that also highlights the relationships between the included determinants. But as Rohrschneider’s interest solely lies in the democratic aspect of the EU, his model is parsimonious and focuses on determinants concerning political representation. Nevertheless, appropriate theoretical considerations concerning the role and position of value-based determinants are incorporated in Rohrschneider’s model, which will guide my research as well. Christian and Trechsel (2002) provide a further model explaining the attitude structure underlying support for EU membership in Switzerland. Despite its focus on a specific country, it brings forward two relevant aspects for my study. Firstly, it highlights identity aspects – an issue completely missing in Rohrschneider’s model. Secondly, it deals with factors relevant for non-member states, which can contribute to my study even if their case lies in another European region.

In addition to models that explicitly specify relationships between attitudes underlying EU support, two other studies are very important for my theoretical considerations. The studies by Anderson (1998) and Hooghe and Marks (2005) focus on the role of judgmental shortcuts in explaining EU support. While considering ‘traditional’ EU determinants, they also take into account determinants from a cognitive psychological point of view. They argue that studies that do not model shortcuts ignore the remote and complex nature of the EU, and that models without shortcuts are too demanding to adequately reflect the attitudes of ordinary citizens. This is exactly the approach I will take in specifying my model of support, which makes these studies useful and valuable starting points for my own analyses. Moreover Anderson, in collaboration with Tverdova (2004), transferred his considerations to the Central and Eastern European context. This study shows the applicability and relevance of shortcuts in this new context, and develops useful indications for a systematical integration of such determinants in models explicitly dealing with CEE.

Despite these promising attempts, a comprehensive model that systematically explains the attitude structure underlying EU support in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the role and position of cognitive heuristics in this attitude struc-
ture does not exist. This study tries to fill this gap in research on EU support by specifying a theoretical model and testing this model empirically. The following paragraph summarizes the consequences resulting from the presented state of the art and from shortcomings on the theoretical and empirical level. Furthermore, it outlines the methods and data used in this study.

1.5 Consequences from shortcomings in current research and methods and data

From the detected shortcomings and the presented current state of research, several points arise in which this work goes beyond current research. The shortcomings have consequences for the theoretical and the empirical part of this study.

The first consequence touches on theory-building and modeling. There is a need for a coherent model representing the attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE because many of the existing studies simply test single or multiple determinants without theorizing a coherent model. Moreover, the existing models either deal with slightly different dependent variables or they study a different context. A new model should be embedded into current research so as not to further add to the already existing heterogeneity and diversity of approaches explaining EU support. This means that the model should allow for theoretical and empirical considerations from research on EU support, cognitive psychological findings of opinion formation, and the special situation in CEE around the time of accession. The formulation of a general model is not only the basis of the empirical analyses needed to answer the research questions; it is an explicit contribution to the enhancement of theoretical knowledge of EU support. The starting point of my theoretical considerations is the model of EU support by Fuchs (2003) because it combines research on support for political regimes and the European Union with a special emphasis on judgmental shortcuts. I critically review his theoretical approach and question the transferability of it to my context which leads to an extension of his model to adequately grasp the distinctiveness of the CEE context. The model extension primarily consists of a systematic integration of shortcuts which results from the transfer of general findings from the cognitive psychological literature on heuristics to the European political context. The main purpose of the model is not only to identify the determinants of EU support, but also to detect the relationship between various predictors of EU support, which play a crucial role in the opinion formation process in the European context.

Insofar, the model to be presented in this book contributes to theory integration. Firstly, it is based on different approaches from sub-disciplines of political science research and cognitive psychology in order to describe the attitude struc-
ture underlying EU support in one coherent model. Secondly, it is clarified if established approaches drawn from the Western European context apply to a new context, specifically the CEE context.

The second consequence of the shortcomings from current research deals with the temporal proximity of the CEE countries’ accession to the EU. There is a need for further theoretical considerations and empirical testing of the determinants of support and the underlying attitude structure in this context around EU accession. Now, several years after the accession, it is possible, for the first time, to compare attitudes at different periods around the eastward enlargement of the EU: the period before the accession, the time directly after the accession and the period after several years of membership when the EU has become a part of the daily life in CEE. Moreover, political attitudes in CEE needed time to develop after fundamental political and economic changes had taken place during the dual transformation process; thus, an analysis of public opinion in this region at a point in time with a certain temporal distance to the democratization phase might reveal interesting results that differ from analyses covering an earlier period. The temporal dimension of my study contributes to understanding changes in the opinion formation process and in the attitude structure from a time when the EU first became extremely relevant for CEE citizens (i.e. the months around the referendums on EU membership) to a time when EU membership became normal. The theoretical considerations on cross-temporal changes around the accession are not restricted to the case of the 2004 accessions; moreover, generalizations can be made concerning forthcoming accessions as well. Consequently, my model specification contributes to general theory-building that addresses opinion formation in times before and after EU enlargements.

In the early 1990s, the issue of heterogeneity of citizens in terms of their cognitive abilities was brought back into the discussion on opinion formation processes and research on voting behavior. In comparative research on attitudes towards the EU, a systematic modeling of heterogeneity effects is still missing as most analyses account for sophistication or education effects by simply specifying these determinants as additional independent variables of EU support. However, research on the effects of cognitive abilities suggests an interaction or moderating effect of this variable, meaning that cognitive abilities alter the effects of other determinants on support rather than exerting a direct effect. I elaborate on the role of political sophistication as a factor that changes the attitude structure underlying EU support. The inclusion of sophistication is an important additional step in analyzing attitude structures on the individual level because it reveals differences between citizens that would otherwise remain concealed if only one model for all individuals is considered. Moreover, this is a necessary step for an analysis dealing with attitudes towards remote or complex political objects because opinion formation on such objects is especially dependent on cognitive
abilities. The integration of sophistication undertaken here, coupled with a systematic integration of judgmental shortcuts as determinants of EU support, goes beyond current research by including important concepts from cognitive psychological research into research on EU support.

Apart from limitations on the theoretical level, the methods currently used for selecting countries in comparative EU studies prove to be inadequate. Many studies restrict their analyses to a few countries without explaining the selection process. My aim is to test general hypotheses on the post-communist region as a whole; this objective cannot be reached by an arbitrary selection of a few countries. Therefore, I include all countries, fulfilling the conditions that I have set to answer the research questions adequately. The set conditions are: (1) the countries selected must share a communist past; (2) they must have been part of the EU accession wave of May 2004. Accordingly, data from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia will be included. Studying the full set of relevant countries is one distinctive characteristic different from other studies dealing with support for the EU in CEE.

While taking this comprehensive approach, this study is restricted to the 2004 eastward enlargement for one theoretical and one methodological reason. The theoretical reason is the fact that, first and foremost, my interest lies within the attitudes towards the EU in post-communist countries and thus, my model reflects the situation there. Consequently, I do not include Malta, Cyprus, or countries that acceded to the EU in former enlargement rounds. The methodological reason for excluding other post-communist countries can be found in the temporal dimension that I analyze. Studying changes in attitude structures before and after the accession to the EU requires the analyzed countries to have a common date of accession in order to ensure comparability. Hence, it is not possible to include Bulgaria and Romania into this analysis because they joined the EU two and a half years later. Furthermore, the two latecomers joined the EU too recently to adequately examine them in a separate analysis.

As the selected countries represent most similar systems the model can be analyzed with a pooled data set in order to come to conclusions that can be applied to the CEE region. It is not the aim of this study to detect differences in the

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10 Far from denying the differences between the countries analyzed, it must be recognized that this group of countries has more common features than distinctive features. With references to their contemporary history, including the communist legacy, dual transition to democracy and free market economy, accession to NATO and to the EU, the similarities are evident. Additionally, they are alike regarding their socio-economic development, small size (except for Poland), and location at the fringe of the EU-15 (e.g. Beichelt 2004a: 51-53, but see Berglund et al. 1995: 368). These similarities are more important than the differences when considered on a global scale.
explanatory power of certain determinants of EU support in single post-communist countries, i.e. the similarities and differences between the countries are not analyzed. Therefore, this study is restricted to pooled analyses combining the data of all eight post-communist countries.

Because I am interested in the attitude structure, particularly the relationship between national attitudes serving as shortcuts and European attitudes, one might argue that I need to analyze my model separately for each of the surveyed countries. It might be put forward that with the political situation in every country being unique, there are different influences on the thinking about politics. I do not deny that there are differences between the countries included in this study, differences that stem from national political and economic aspects, as well as aspects concerning the relationship with the EU. But compared to other countries from Western, Northern, or Southern Europe, the similarities of this very homogeneous region clearly prevail.

Furthermore, the few existing differences do not touch on the core of one of my main assumptions, namely that citizens use shortcuts from the national context to evaluate the EU. This means that citizens do not or are not able to distinguish between the national and the European level. There would be one exception to what has just been stated: If a national government or a notable majority within the parliament opposed European integration and EU membership and dissociated themselves from the EU, citizens would probably become aware of the EU as distinct from the nation-state. If this alienation were communicated to citizens, my assumption would not hold anymore. However, this is not the case in any of the CEE countries during the time period under investigation. There is not a single country where the majority of the political elites was against membership; generally anti-EU parties neither gained many votes nor many seats in parliament (Beichelt 2004b: 41-44, Bielasiak 2006, Fölsz/Tóka 2006, Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006).

Thus, with the political elites behaving in a similar manner cross-nationally on the issue of returning to Europe, no differences in the attitude structure of the respective citizens are to be expected. Or, more precisely put, differences in the attitude structure of individuals cannot be attributed primarily to the citizen’s country of origin because of the homogenous thinking of the political elites and the common characteristics regarding political and economic issues throughout the entire CEE region.11

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11 A broader theoretical scope including formulating and testing hypotheses regarding the causes for differences in EU support in single countries would be a meaningful work, but it would go beyond the scope of this study which concentrates on the attitude structure of individuals. Furthermore, testing such hypotheses would lead to severe methodological problems. The most appropriate method would be a hierarchical linear model (multi-level...
The selection of countries influences theory-building and the specification of my model on EU support. Because this model concentrates on explaining EU support in CEE, it includes attitudes as determinants of support only if they are assumed to have a general influence. This leads to the exclusion of variables which may be relevant for explaining support in single post-communist countries. Such a general model, which is specified on the basis of the considerations presented, can be used for meaningful empirical analyses.

Regarding the empirical part of this work two limitations in current research are addressed: (1) the appropriate statistical method; (2) the handling of missing values. The opinion formation process that leads to an evaluation of the EU and the attitude structure underlying EU support are complex. There are attitudes that precede other attitudes which in turn influence the evaluation of EU support. A model reflecting this attitude structure cannot be adequately tested by using normal regressions because such a model is characterized by a number of chains of causation, which means that some determinants do not directly influence EU support but are mediated through other determinants. An appropriate method to test complex relations with direct and indirect effects is structural equation modeling (SEM) – a method especially designed to adequately grasp chains of causality. This method is applied in this work to test the theoretically developed model empirically. It makes it possible to decide if the theoretically assumed attitude structure can be confirmed empirically, and it allows for an analysis of the role and position of all modeled determinants as well as their relations to each other. Another advantage of this method is that it makes it possible to test moderation effects, their existence, and their statistical significance. Thus, the advantage of embracing mediation and moderation effects into one statistical method makes SEM indispensable for testing my model.

A second consequence drawn from the limitations of current research affects the handling of missing values. To put my empirical results on a firm basis, I decided to do multiple imputation. This procedure is superior to many other existing procedures of handling missing values – especially the most common, list-wise deletion or mean substitution. Firstly, multiple imputation guarantees that no cases are lost, which is relevant when using surveys with lots of missing values on the variables used – with that being the case in the data sets employed here. Generally, the level of missing values is quite high in surveys conducted in CEE; a fact that is compounded when the survey deals with remote and complex things like European political aspects. Secondly, multiple imputation can pro-

analysis), but this kind of analysis requires more cases than I have. Too few cases cannot guarantee enough variance within the contextual factors which should be responsible for differences between countries (Steenbergen/Jones 2002, Arzheimer 2008: 164).
duce unbiased and efficient estimates leading to better statistical validity. Preparing the data sets adequately and using the appropriate statistical method to analyze these data sets are preconditions to empirically test the theoretical model in a sufficient way.

To conclude, by addressing the theoretical and empirical shortcomings in current research and by taking necessary steps to solve these shortcomings to a certain extent, this study seeks to improve research on support for the EU. The theoretical framework and the research design of my study make it possible to test a general model, the role and position of the determinants within this model and their relations to each other, as well as the explanatory power of single determinants – all of which are central concerns to adequately conduct a theory-driven empirical study and to answer the research questions in an appropriate way.

To answer the research questions, I rely on four data sets from the Eurobarometer. The Eurobarometer is a survey that has been conducted by the European Commission since 1973. Besides the Standard Eurobarometer (EB), which surveys public opinion within all member countries of the EU on a biannual basis, several other Eurobarometer are available, measuring political attitudes in other countries (e.g. applicant and candidate countries) or measuring attitudes towards special topics (e.g. globalization, EU enlargement, climate change). To analyze public opinion in CEE before their accession to the EU, I use one data set from the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer (CCEB). The CCEB was conducted in ten Central and Eastern European countries from 2001 until 2004. After the enlargement the new member states were included into the Standard Eurobarometer (for a detailed description of the Eurobarometer surveys see Gesis 2009a, European Commission 2009). Thus, I can use several data sets from these surveys to analyze public opinion in CEE after the enlargement. Because the two different kinds of Eurobarometer contain almost the same questions cross-temporal comparability is secured. Furthermore, the explicit focus on attitudes towards the EU makes the Eurobarometer data sets the most appropriate ones for my purpose. With these data sets EU support in CEE before and after the EU enlargement and the underlying attitude structure can sufficiently be analyzed.

Having clarified the objectives of this study and the theoretical and methodological scope, I shortly summarize what is not part of this study. I neither include any objective individual characteristics nor context factors as possible determinants because my main objective is to study the attitude structure underlying EU support. With regard to the dependent variable, which is reduced to the aspect of support for the EU, I do not deal with explaining voting behavior in EP elections or in EU referendums. The scope of the whole model – the independent variables as well as the dependent variable - is strictly narrowed to an attitude model. This
model is tested for the Central and Eastern European region using pooled data sets without analyzing the eight countries separately. No hypotheses on country-specific characteristics or on differences between single countries are compiled and studied.

1.6 Outline of the book

My work is divided into a theoretical and an empirical section. The theoretical framework is described in chapters 2 and 3; the empirical analysis is presented in chapter 4. The theoretical part consists of two sections: (1) The aim of chapter 2 is to conceptualize a model explaining generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe. (2) The scope of chapter 3 covers the role of political sophistication when studying opinion formation processes and attitude structures underlying EU support. The empirical analysis roughly mirrors this structure: First, the theoretical model is empirically tested in general, and then the model is tested by considering political sophistication.

Although the aim is to specify a model for CEE, my considerations are embedded into research from the Western context. Firstly, this is necessary due to the recentness of the accession of CEE countries to the EU, which accounts for a lack of secure findings on explaining EU support in this context. Secondly, I want to avoid an artificial fragmentation or even an inflation of possible determinants of EU support. CEE countries are now member states of the EU, so general remarks on EU support developed for Western countries can be transferred to the Eastern context despite differences between the Eastern and Western contexts. An uncoupled examination of CEE would hinder a consistent and structured theory-building on EU support. Hence, my general approach in this work is as follows: In the theoretical section, I examine the current state of research at first. The presented theoretical considerations and empirical findings originate from research on EU support in the Western context and, with reference to cognitive psychological research, even from research on the American public. Subsequently, these insights obtained are transferred to my context, and implications as well as hypotheses are deduced specifically for this context.

The construction of a model of EU support for CEE is embedded into research on support for political regimes in order to link the model to current research. The starting point for my considerations is the model of support for the EU developed by Fuchs, which is based on his general model of support for a political regime. His general model is integrated into political culture research because Fuchs works in the tradition of Almond and Verba or Easton. However, his enhancements, particularly the systematization of determinants of regime support,
make his model fruitful for my purpose and ideal for empirical testing. In chapter 2.1.1 I will describe Fuchs’ general model of regime support. Then I will discuss the modifications Fuchs implemented to make the general model suitable for the European context in chapter 2.1.2. This EU model consists of relevant EU-specific determinants and national attitudes used as further predictors of EU support.

The focus of chapter 2.2 is the adaptation of this model to the situation of new member states from CEE. Some remarks about the peculiarities of this region compared to other EU member states are necessary, and are summarized in chapter 2.2.1. Then the determinants of EU support, which play a role in opinion formation, are described in detail. First, I focus on attitudes concerning specific EU aspects: political performance of the EU and identification with a European community (Chapter 2.2.2). Second, the need for national attitudes as additional determinants and their role in an EU model are discussed in chapter 2.2.3.

The role of national attitudes as cognitive heuristics is examined with respect to two different research traditions: (1) research on support for the EU in chapter 2.2.3.2, which highlights the necessity of shortcuts in the European context; (2) research on cognitive psychology in chapter 2.2.3.3, which deals with the functioning of shortcuts. Both research traditions lead to the assumption that particular national attitudes can serve as cognitive heuristics for evaluating European aspects. Therefore, these theoretical considerations are combined to come up with coherent arguments for a systematic integration of national attitudes as cognitive heuristics in a model of EU support (Chapter 2.2.3.4). Then, these general arguments are examined against the background of the CEE context in chapter 2.2.3.5. In addition to the heuristics, another national attitude must be considered as relevant in explaining EU support: national identity. Its role and position in a theoretical model is discussed generally from a social psychological perspective and a specific EU research perspective in chapter 2.2.3.6. In chapter 2.2.3.7, this discussion is transferred to the CEE context. Subsequently, the arguments are summarized to come up with implications for a model of EU support for new post-communist EU member states (Chapter 2.2.4). The last step in theory-building includes the specification of a model of EU support for CEE (Chapter 2.2.5) that will be tested in the empirical part of this study. This model specifies the role and position of the different determinants in the model and the relations of the determinants to each other. It represents the assumed attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE with special emphasis on the determinants from the national context that serve as cognitive heuristics. To conclude the first theoretical section, several testable hypotheses regarding the assumed effects in the model are formulated in chapter 2.3.

Chapter 3 encompasses the second theoretical section, which deals with the effects of political sophistication on the attitude structure underlying EU support.
This chapter is guided by the assumption that the opinion formation process of individuals is conditioned by their level of political sophistication. After describing this assumption and its implications in chapter 3.1, I will define the concept of political sophistication and a way to measure it in chapter 3.2. Subsequently, empirical findings on this concept are described: The central aim is to examine how political sophistication can condition the use of cognitive heuristics (Chapter 3.3.1), and how it affects attitudes in the context of the EU (Chapter 3.3.2). At the end, hypotheses on the moderating effect of political sophistication on EU support and on the underlying attitude structure are formulated.

Chapter 4 focuses on the empirical testing of the model of EU support in CEE in the period around the accession. First of all, I need to elaborate on preliminary remarks on data, research design, and missing values (Chapter 4.2), then on structural equation modeling (Chapter 4.3). The last point makes it clear why this method is most adequate for my purpose of testing attitude structures. In chapter 4.4 the operationalization of the dependent variable, support for the EU, and of the EU-specific and national determinants of EU support follows these preliminary remarks. Before testing the theoretically proposed model, descriptive findings are depicted, which provide a basis for the following causal analyses. These descriptive findings include the level of the dependent variable, support for the EU in CEE, and its development in the periods before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and after years of EU membership (Chapter 4.5.1). To answer the first research question on the determinants of EU support and the underlying attitude structure, I use the data from 2007, the last data point at hand, to answer the proposed question in detail (Chapter 4.5.2). Chapter 4.5.2.1 starts with dimension reduction methods – namely explorative and confirmatory factor analyses – which are necessary steps to decide whether the attitude structure proposed in theory, can be confirmed empirically. These are important preparatory steps needed to use the following SEM as adequately as possible. In chapter 4.5.2.2 the proposed model of EU support is tested and analyzed with reference to the first research question. The analysis is structured along the hypotheses proposed in chapter 2.3. The next chapter answers the second research question; hence it deals with the changes in the attitude structure in the period around the accession. Four SEM from different points in time are compared in order to analyze changes and stability in the attitude structure over time (Chapter 4.5.3). In addition to the analysis of the model for the total population, the heterogeneity assumption is tested empirically. After defining different levels of political sophistication in chapter 4.6, empirical analyses in chapter 4.7 are conducted by including the moderator effect of political sophistication. First, the level and development of EU support for different levels of sophistication are described, and then causal analyses are estimated for testing the model of EU support including the moderator effect of sophistication. Special emphasis is placed on the effect of
sophistication on the role of cognitive heuristics in the model of EU support. Lastly, the temporal development of the attitude structure and the use of heuristics are examined depending on the level of sophistication. These empirical analyses are structured along the hypotheses on the heterogeneity assumption formulated in chapter 3.4. Finally, the last chapter contains a summary of the main results and a short outlook.
Conceptualizing a model explaining support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

2.1 Fuchs’ model of support for the European Union

Fuchs introduces a model of support for the regime of the European Union, i.e. for the EU in its institutional setting. This model includes determinants of EU support which are considered relevant either in the literature on support for political regimes or in the research on the EU (Fuchs 2003: 31, 35-37, Fuchs et al. 2009: 20-24). Determinants include the performance of the EU, examined from a utilitarian as well as from a value-based perspective, and the affective binding to a European community. In addition, generalized national attitudes are modeled as determinants that precede the EU-specific attitudes. Therefore, Fuchs’ model accomplishes two important things: (1) it consists of relevant determinants of support for the EU as a political regime; (2) it allows for the special nature of the EU by integrating national attitudes into the model.

To approach the topic systematically, Fuchs suggests embedding attitudes towards the EU into a general theoretical framework of research on attitudes and on regime support. Because the EU is a democratic political regime, general models of support for a political regime, originally designed for nation-states, can be a starting point in developing a model of support for the EU. Fuchs introduces an EU support model (2003: 34) that is built on his general model of support for a political regime, which incorporates research on political culture by Almond and Verba (1965, 1996) as well as research on support by Easton (1965, 1967, 1975). Therefore, Fuchs’ model is a further development and systematization of the traditional research on support. Its strength lies in his theoretical considerations that include the foundation pillars of research on support, but it goes a step further by developing a model open for empirical testing. In this chapter, I first describe the main features of the general model of regime support in order to subsequently introduce Fuchs’ model of support for the EU.

2.1.1 A general model of support for a political regime

As stated above, Fuchs’ considerations are embedded into the research on political culture, a concept for which Almond summarized the main cornerstones: “Political culture theory defines political culture in this fourfold way: (1) It consists of the set of subjective orientations to politics in a national population or
subset of a national population. (2) It has cognitive, affective, and evaluative components; it includes knowledge and beliefs about political reality; feelings with respect to politics, and commitments to political values. (3) The content of political culture is the result of childhood socialization, education, media exposure, and adult experience with governmental, social, and economic performance. (4) Political culture affects political and governmental structure and performance – constraints it, but surely does not determine it. The causal arrows between culture and structure and performance go both ways” (Almond 1990: 143-144).

The importance of political culture can be seen in the postulate that states that the stability of a regime depends on how the citizens internalize attitudes and which behaviors they exhibit, with both having to be congruent with the institutional structure. It is assumed that the congruence of system structure and system culture is a requirement for a system’s stability (Almond/Verba 1965: 20-22, Fuchs 2007b). Based on this core assumption of political culture research, some aspects from a variety of political orientations making up political culture can be identified as particularly relevant for stability. Almond differentiates between system culture, process culture, and policy culture, whereby system culture is relevant for the stability of a political system. System culture is defined as “the distributions of attitudes toward the national community, the regime, and the authorities […] These would include the sense of national identity, attitudes toward the legitimacy of the regime and its various institutions, and attitudes toward the legitimacy and effectiveness of the incumbents of the various political roles” (Almond 1996: 28). This definition of system culture incorporates David Easton’s concept of political support into the concept of political culture; in fact, in his definition of system culture, Almond uses the technical terms that Easton provides. According to Fuchs, the concept of political support can be related to the concept of political culture insofar as, in Easton’s view, the persistence of a democratic regime depends on a more or less large input of support, i.e. on certain political attitudes (Fuchs 2002). Because Easton’s concept is more precise than the original considerations on political culture, his concept can be used for further systematizations and specifications.

While the theoretical significance of the political support concept is centered on the macro-level because it refers to the persistence of a system, support cannot be meaningfully defined and identified as a characteristic of a political system. Support is an aggregation of attitudes that can be identified and measured at the micro-level. Consequently, support is an attitude and thus a socio-psychological concept, which can be tapped by socio-psychological instruments (Fuchs 1989: 21). As mentioned above, Easton defines “support as an attitude by which a person orients himself to an object either favorably or unfavorably, positively or negatively” (Easton 1975: 436). Positive evaluations go with strong
support, while negative evaluations are connected to low or no support. Easton distinguishes three objects of orientation, which citizens can support or not support: the political community, the regime, and the political authorities. Furthermore, he differs between two modes of orientation, specified as diffuse and specific support (Easton 1967: 249, 267-277, 1975: 436-437). Diffuse support for the regime is the most relevant starting point for Fuchs’ considerations. This kind of regime support can develop from more specific attitudes towards political authorities. If these attitudes are generalized, i.e. if these attitudes are increasingly seen as independent from the concrete political authorities and from the day-to-day outputs of these authorities, they can be transferred to the regime itself and are called regime trust. On the other hand, diffuse regime support builds on the belief that the regime is in consistence with one’s own subjective values. This attitude is named legitimacy (Easton 1975: 444-453).

Easton’s systematization, especially his concept of diffuse regime support, is used by Fuchs to elaborate on the relevant attitude objects and modes of orientations connected to support for a regime. Fuchs’ further development of Easton’s considerations is undertaken in two steps. Firstly, he develops a hierarchical model of democratic systems. A democratic system can be divided into three levels arranged in a hierarchical order according to their level of abstraction: values, structure, and process (Fuchs 2007c: 166). The highest level is made up of political values defining a desirable type of political system. The second level describes the existing institutional structure of the regime. The lowest level refers to the actions of political authorities (Fuchs 1999: 165, 2002: 35-36). Secondly, Fuchs specifies this general model as an attitude model. In this model, he defines different measurable attitudinal constructs on each level and their relations to each other. The highest level is organized by the people’s commitment to democratic values. Because of the centrality of values, this level is defined by a normative or moral standard of evaluation. If people think a system is congruent with their values, they are likely to support that system. On the structural level, regime support refers to support for the democratic regime in terms of its structural and institutional implementation, which is captured in a constitutional form and by binding procedures. The lowest level (procedural level) is made up of support for the political authorities. This level refers to the reality, i.e. the existing democracy in a country. This reality is shaped by the actions taken by the political authorities and the results of these actions. If the people are satisfied with the outputs that the political authorities produce, the political actors will be supported. The concept, on which this form of support is based, is called political

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performance (Fuchs 2003: 31-32). According to Roller, political performance can be defined “as the evaluation of what political actors do and the outcomes of these actions” (2005: 20).\(^{13}\) Political performance of democratic systems can be differentiated into two forms because of the “double nature” (Fuchs 1998b: 10, 1998a: 152) of democratic systems: they are both, political systems as such, and, more specifically, they actually are democratic (political) systems. Accordingly, systemic performance includes the evaluations of outputs which any kind of political system must generate. Hence, it encompasses the outputs which a democracy generates in its quality as a political system. Examples include economic growth and domestic security. The standard of evaluation is an instrumental mode of orientation; first and foremost, it refers to economic outputs from which citizens can benefit. By contrast, democratic performance focuses on the outputs which a democracy must realize because of the specific democratic values to which a democracy or democratic processes are bound. Such values include fundamental rights and the responsiveness of the political authorities to the preferences of society. Democratic performance thus describes the evaluation of a system in a normative, moral way by adjusting the reality of a system with personal values concerning a democracy (Fuchs 1998a: 152, Roller 2005: 22-24) (see Figure 1).\(^{14}\)

The structural level is the level of support that is of interest here because it is the support on this level that is relevant for the stability of a political system. According to Fuchs, support on this level is influenced by values and evaluations of the political performance. Unlike Easton’s theoretical considerations, Fuchs conjoins the stated attitudinal constructs through causal structures. Values are related to the structural level, because it can be assumed, that citizens support the structure of their regime, if they belief that the regime is congruent with their values or moral concepts. Regarding the influence of the procedural level on the structural level it is assumed that generalized evaluations of different political authori-

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\(^{13}\) In Easton’s terminology this is specific support. The objects of evaluation are the authorities. However, via the process of generalization this kind of support can be transferred to the regime. The evaluations of different authorities’ outputs in a very general way over a longer period, i.e. the generalization of output evaluations, are named ‘trust’ by Easton. Because the evaluations of day-to-day or short-term processes are generalized, trust is no longer a kind of specific support; instead, it is one part of diffuse support and can be related to the systemic level because the object of evaluation is the regime (Easton 1975: 447-450).

\(^{14}\) In a more recent publication Fuchs and his colleagues use the terms ‘effectiveness’ to describe systemic performance and ‘legitimacy’ for democratic performance (Fuchs et al. 2009: 23-24). These terms are used by Almond as well to refer to possible evaluations of political authorities. However, I keep on using the terms systemic and democratic performance because Fuchs uses these terms in his model of EU support which is my reference point.
ties over a longer period of time and the reality in a given democracy influence the view and the evaluation of the regime structure. Therefore, the regime structure will be supported if the citizens recognize the congruence between the structure and their own democratic principles, and if the regime’s political outputs are meaningful and advantageous for its citizens. Of course, negative effects are possible as well: The stability of a democratic system will be at risk if the normative democratic principles are not accepted or if the performance of the system is negatively evaluated (Fuchs 1996: 260, 2003: 31-33).

Figure 1: Fuchs’ general model of support for a political regime

The presented causal directions in the model are the relevant directions if the aim is to explain support for the regime structure. In his primary hierarchical model of support, Fuchs modeled the dominant causal direction from the most abstract level to the most specific level, i.e. from the value level via the structural level to the procedural level. The inverse direction was assumed as a time-delayed feedback. However, if the objective is to analyze support for the structure of a system, then, according to Fuchs, the causal direction assumed here can be modeled theoretically and tested empirically (Fuchs 2002: 37-38, cf. as well Fuchs/Rohrschneider 2001: 248-249).\footnote{When Fuchs specified his model of support for the EU he assumed the presented causal direction in his model of EU support as he was interested in explaining support for the EU as a regime. As I am interested in the same dependent variable, I will focus theoretically on this causal direction as well.}

When specifying this hierarchical model as an attitude model, Fuchs amends his general model by adding a further predictor for regime support, namely atti-
tudes towards the community (cf. Fuchs 1998b, 2003). As stated previously, besides the attitudes towards the regime and the authorities, Almond’s original concept of system culture includes a set of attitudes towards the community (Almond 1996: 28). Since Easton is Almond’s reference point when discussing system culture, Easton’s definition of political community should be used. Political community is the “aspect of a political system that consists of its members seen as a group of persons bound together by a political division of labor” (Easton 1967: 177). Thus, political community is about relations among the citizens in a given system. Easton summarizes the perception of the political community as “[t]he we-feeling or sense of community which indicates political cohesion of persons, regardless of the kind of regime they have or may develop, consists of the feeling of belonging together as a group, which, because it shares a political structure, also shares a political fate” (Easton 1967: 185). However, according to Fuchs, it is this definition that makes the inclusion of this attitude into the attitude model highly problematic. Easton clarifies the relevance of identification with a political community for regime support but he states that the persistence of any regime depends, among other things, on the identification of the people with the political community within that given regime. This means that an individual’s diffuse feelings towards a certain community can be transported to any system if the community is associated with this system. Easton’s remarks about the content and possible role of attitudes towards the community are very general and abstract because they can be applied to political communities in various systems; they are not restricted to democracies. This leads to an incompatibility between Easton’s definition of political community and political culture theory, which is a theory basically made for democratic systems (Fuchs 2002: 43-44, 2007c: 170). Therefore, Fuchs concludes that identification with a political community, also referred to as political identity, cannot be a part of the level model of support in its narrow sense. But attitudes towards the political community can be included into a broader attitude model of support; they can act as an additional component amending the predictors for regime support, which result directly from the level model. Therefore, Fuchs specifies a causal link between the sense of community and support for the regime structure. This means that the affective binding to the political community can directly influence support for the regime (Fuchs 2003: 33). A given we-feeling can create trust in or solidarity among fellow citizens, which leads to an acceptance of democratic decisions made by the majority. Diffuse support for the regime rests on such a we-feeling as citizens who identify with a community accept this community’s regime and institutions (Easton 1967: 171-189, 320-340).
2.1.2 Modifications of the general model for the application to the European Union

If one wants to transfer the above-described model to the European Union, support for the EU would depend on a commitment to abstract democratic values, the EU’s systemic and democratic performance, and the citizens’ sense of being a part of the European community. In order to apply this model to the EU, the EU must first fulfill the general characteristics of a political system. Fuchs argues that since the Treaty of Maastricht, when the member states transferred competences to the newly created EU, the EU has become an institutional structure that can make binding decisions on a range of political matters. Therefore, it can be characterized as a political system (Fuchs 2003: 30-31).

Even if the model is in principle transferable, such a simple model would fall short of capturing the European case. As the EU is not a nation-state but a distinct system, the attitude model described above cannot be simply used to analyze support for the EU. Therefore, Fuchs has extended his model of support for a political regime to explain the European case adequately. Furthermore, due to inadequate data, he has been forced to review his model because otherwise it would not be possible to test it empirically. In the following section, I will extensively describe Fuchs’ considerations published in his article “Das Demokratiedefizit der Europäischen Union und die politische Integration Europas: Eine Analyse der Einstellungen der Bürger in Westeuropa” (2003), because the presented model is the starting point for my considerations outlined in chapter 2.2. I will retrace Fuchs’ theoretical argumentation about amending the support model in order to use it for the EU. Then I will discuss the difficulties he had with adequate indicators, which to a certain extent are existent in my study as well. Afterward I will introduce his model of support for the EU and comment on its implications for my own model.17

16 The democratic deficit of the European Union and Europe’s political integration: an analysis of attitudes of citizens in Western Europe (Translation by the author).
17 There are other authors who implement Easton’s considerations about support for a political regime into a model of support for the EU or European integration (e.g. Lindberg/Scheingold 1970, Gabel 1998b, Kopecky/Mudde 2002). Moreover, Wessels even refers to Fuchs’ hierarchical model to specify a model of euroskepticism (2007). As Fuchs’ model is comprehensive, systematic, and designed for public support, it is a better fit for my purpose than the models by other authors.
2.1.2.1 Integration of national attitudes as determinants of support for the European Union

Fuchs argues that the main reason for amending the attitude model in order to test support for the EU is the special characteristics of the European system (2003: 33). These characteristics influence the expectations that the citizens have of the EU, which in turn affect the citizens’ attitudes towards that system. To understand the relationship between the EU and its citizens, one must consider the latest historical developments on the European continent.

Before the Treaty of Maastricht came into effect in 1992, the European Community (EC), as an intergovernmental regime, generated support in a twofold way: Firstly, because the EC was an economic system, it was evaluated by instrumental standards, especially by its economic performance. As long as the EC provided prosperity and welfare, the people were happy with the system. Secondly, there was a transfer of legitimacy from the member states to the EC. As long as the governments, elected and legitimated in the nation-states, decided unanimously on the competences and the future of the Community, European politics was more of a political issue than a political object. Therefore, knowledge of and attitudes towards its institutional arrangements were not necessary. But since the European integration project has developed into a supranational regime, the institutional design of the EU is – at least in parts – uncoupled from the national authorities and the nation-states, which leads to the conclusion that support for this new kind of system should arise from other sources (Fuchs 2003: 35-36, see as well Weiler 1991, Kielmansegg 2003, Eichenberg/Dalton 2007: 132, Hooghe 2007).

Objectively, the Maastricht Treaty changed the EC by implementing a supranational regime – the EU – that acts above the nation-states and restricts the power of its member states. The question is whether citizens recognize and comprehend this new structure of the EU even though the EU is a distant and difficult to describe political object. Attitudes determining support for the EU and the attitude structure underlying this support can change only if the citizens are aware of the political component of European integration. Most scientists argue that people recognize the political dimension of the economic integration that the Maastricht Treaty established (Fuchs 2003: 35, e.g. Rohrschneider 2002, Eichenberg/Dalton 2007, Hooghe 2007). They are convinced that people see the EU as a political regime because they either recognize the transfer of political competences to the supranational institutions, or they experience the consequences of European integration in their everyday lives, e.g. in the form of European passports, the European flag on the license plates, or the Euro as the common currency. Other authors, however, argue that the European institutional structure and decision-making process are highly complex and opaque. Furthermore, the EU is
a unique system, and a classification in well-known categories based on the nation-states is difficult. Therefore, it is very difficult for ordinary citizens to understand information about the EU and it is unlikely that citizens have the motivation and ability to develop independent attitudes towards the EU (Fuchs 2003: 36, e.g. Caldeira/Gibson 1995: 356, Anderson 1998, more generally: Zaller 1992). If the first case applies, it is likely that people use new standards in evaluating the EU because they are aware that the integration project once confined to the economic sphere has changed into a political system. According to the second view, however, people have not changed their criteria of evaluation because the EU is not a political object to them (Fuchs 2003: 35-36).

In his study, Fuchs calls for a middle position. Because of the integration of the European supranational regime and the national regimes in a multi-level structure, the nation-states remain the dominant actors on the European stage – at least in the perception of European citizens. Therefore, national regimes continue to be the primary reference even when thinking about European politics, and people can be tempted to infer from the familiar political system – the nation-state – to the unknown European political system (Fuchs 2003: 37, see as well Anderson 1998, Kritzinger 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). The use of attitudes towards the nation-state for generating attitudes towards the EU depends on the citizen’s cognitive resources. If a citizen possesses good cognitive capacities and a lot of information about the EU, it is likely that this citizen comes up with self-contained EU attitudes. However, if a person is lacking such cognitive resources it is more likely that EU attitudes depend on generalized attitudes towards national political objects. Hence, Fuchs concludes that the EU is a diffuse attitude object for ordinary citizens, while at the same time being a more or less autonomous attitude object. This leads to the inclusion of national attitudes as determinants of specific EU attitudes and EU support into the model of regime support for the EU. In what way these national attitudes are integrated into Fuchs’ EU model will be explained in chapter 2.1.2.3. Before I come to that, I will briefly explain the necessary modifications of Fuchs’ model because of problems with adequate indicators.

2.1.2.2 Problems in measuring determinants of support of the European Union

Besides the theory-driven modifications that have already been explained, Fuchs had to make two other modifications due to practicable reasons. In the data that he used, namely the Eurobarometer 42 from 1994, there were no adequate indicators for two concepts, which he theoretically identified as predictors of regime support. Firstly, the attitudinal concept of commitment to democratic values, which makes up the cultural level, could not be measured in a meaningful way.
Therefore, this level is not a part of his EU model. Secondly, the concept of identification with the political community could only be measured approximately because the only indicator at hand referred to the opinion, if one sees himself as a European in the future. This indicator only measures a preliminary stage of affective identification with the European political community, which can be labeled as a self-description as a European. Therefore, this weaker form of affective binding to a community is modeled as a predictor of support, even if a direct modeling of European identity would be more plausible from a theoretical point of view.\footnote{As my study – because of the use of Eurobarometer data sets – has to face the first mentioned indicator problem as well, I forgo trying to implement the construct “commitment to democratic values” retroactively into my model of EU support. Identification with the European community can be measured in an appropriate way and is integrated into the model as such accordingly.}

2.1.2.3 Fuchs’ final model of support for the European Union

Fuchs’ theoretical model explains general support for the EU (dependent variable) with four determinants.\footnote{Additionally, Fuchs uses his model to test support for a future European government. As this kind of dependent variable is not in my focus of interest, I concentrate on the description of Fuchs’ analysis of general support for the EU.} Three determinants specifically deal with the EU, and it is assumed that they have a direct influence on EU support. These determinants, analogous to the general model presented above, include systemic and democratic performance, as well as identification with the European community. These specific EU attitudes are influenced by generalized national attitudes because, as explained above, the nation-state is the primary reference for citizens when thinking about politics. For that reason, a direct effect of national attitudes on EU support is modeled. That means generalized national attitudes can influence EU support twofold: directly and mediated through specific EU determinants (see Figure 2).\footnote{Besides these effects, Fuchs includes the effect of EU information communicated by the mass media on specific EU attitudes. This only theoretically postulated effect should account for the finding from research on attitudes towards distant political objects that the mass media are essential for opinion formation in such a case (cf. Zaller 1992). As this effect only helps to understand opinion formation it is not part of the empirical testing of the model of support as a mere attitude model.}

When Fuchs tested his model empirically (basis: EB pooled data set including all countries of the EU-15 in 1994), he concretized the influence of generalized national attitudes. While national attitudes were subsumed into one construct in his theoretical model, in the empirical analysis, this construct was differentiated...
and specific national attitudes were modeled as determinants for equivalent specific EU attitudes. This means that in his empirical model he traced the single specific EU attitudes back to variables from the national context with “likewise meaning” (Fuchs 2003: 48). It is said that the systemic performance of the nation-state influences the systemic performance of the EU, that the national democratic performance affects the EU democratic performance, and that the identification with the national community has an influence on the identification with the European community. Furthermore, Fuchs tested the direct influence of these specified national attitudes on EU support. However, he did not test the direct and indirect effects of national attitudes simultaneously. Direct effects were calculated in an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis in which national attitudes were modeled as determinants in addition to specific EU determinants. The result is that national predictors have no noteworthy power in explaining support for the EU. The indirect effect was tested via a detour only. Fuchs shows bivariate regression coefficients between national attitudes and the analogous EU attitudes. All relationships are positive and quite strong suggesting that specific EU attitudes are influenced by their national equivalents. Fuchs concludes that there is a long causal chain: attitudes towards the nation-state determine specific EU attitudes, which in turn affect support for the EU regime.

Figure 2: Fuchs’ model of support for the European Union

Source: Own illustration modified after Fuchs 2003: 34; translation by the author.
2.1.3 Summary and implications

As the remarks about Fuchs’ model of support have shown, his model is useful to analyze support for the EU for three reasons: First, Fuchs uses the seminal work of Easton to identify relevant attitudinal objects which are related to regime support. He enhances Easton’s considerations by integrating them into political culture research and modeling relevant attitudinal objects in causal relations to make the model testable on an empirical basis. Fuchs’ model provides an analytical framework to systematically analyze attitudes towards any democratic regime. Second, Fuchs’ model covers the most important attitudes detected in EU research as relevant attitudes influencing EU support. It includes EU-specific utilitarian (systemic performance) and value-based (democratic performance) factors as well as an identity factor (self-description as European). Moreover, attitudes towards the nation-state are modeled as judgmental shortcuts. Therefore, the model depicts factors from the most important approaches explaining EU support identified in the current state of the art. Third, Fuchs’ model can be transferred to CEE because research on EU support encompassing CEE countries identified relevant determinants of support that are largely similar to those found in the Western context. Overall, Fuchs’ theoretical approach is a successful attempt to combine research on the European Union with research on regime support. This integration of two theoretical strands into one attitude model makes his model a fruitful analytical framework from which to depart and start my analysis. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings within the model and its empirical testing, which I try to eliminate in my study.

First, the role of national attitudes must be discussed in more detail. On a theoretical basis, the very general construct of ‘generalized national attitudes’ is not precise enough to capture the importance of national attitudes in the European context. The separation of different national attitudes, which is part of Fuchs’ empirical test of his model, should already be a part of the theoretical discussion. Therefore, a further elaboration on possible national attitudes as determinants of support for the EU, and their integration and position within the model is needed.

Second, the methods Fuchs used to test the model are not adequate. He only tested his model indirectly by separating the test of direct predictors of EU support from the test of indirect predictors. An empirical model, which simultaneously measures both – direct and indirect effects – is more suitable to detect the relevance of various determinants of EU support. Therefore, using an adequate method for testing the complex attitude model would increase the validity of the results.

The above-mentioned problems concern all analyses dealing with support for the EU from the perspective of research on regime support independent of the countries under investigation. In the case of my study, which intends to develop
a model of EU support suited for Central and Eastern Europeans, further considerations are needed to adequately capture the situation of citizens in new member states. Theoretical arguments for modifying Fuchs’ model of EU support in general and for analyzing support in new member states in particular will be elaborated upon in the upcoming chapters. Improvements concerning the empirical realization of the theoretical model will be discussed in chapter 4.3. To conclude, the model of support for the EU described above is the starting point for specifying a model of EU support suitable for CEE. Nevertheless, the model cannot be transferred one-to-one and the modifications and their theoretical reasoning are part of the following argumentation.

2.2 A modified model of generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

In developing a model of support for the EU in CEE based on Fuchs’ model, the focus will be on the integration, and the role and position of national attitudes. The reason for this focus is pretty clear: the relevance of specific EU attitudes – namely systemic and democratic performance of the EU as well as European identity – is unambiguous because their role and position in the model is secured by the theoretical argumentation underlying the general model of support for any political regime. Regarding the EU model, only a short description of the concrete meaning of specific EU attitudes in the European context is needed; further elaboration on their position as predictors of EU support is not necessary because it has been thoroughly explained above in the description of Fuchs’ models. While the position of specific EU attitudes in the model is clear, their relative importance is not – but this point will be discussed in chapter 2.3 when hypotheses will be formulated concerning the relevance and direction of the influence of the determinants of support.

The main focus of this chapter is to clarify why and how national attitudes should be integrated into a model of EU support in general, and into a model that explains the situation in CEE in particular. In doing so, I rely on findings on the EU in general, first and foremost on findings from the Western context, to subsequently transfer these findings to the CEE context.

First, I will briefly outline some relevant basic contextual information about the region I analyze, which makes clear why this region should be considered separately from other member states. Then I will outline the role of the specific EU determinants, namely EU political performance and European identity, in the model of EU support in CEE. After that, the role and position of national attitudes when evaluating the EU will be discussed at length. In the first step, I will explain why it is necessary to introduce additional determinants of support for
the EU, which may initially appear to have nothing to do with the EU in a narrow sense. In the second step, I will elaborate on why attitudes towards the nation-state are the most appropriate additional determinants of EU support. I will then describe in detail what concrete national attitudes are relevant. These various national attitudes will be described systematically, and then how these attitudes are integrated into my model of EU support will be discussed. The exact position of national attitudes in the model and the direction of the influence of these additional determinants on support will be described. Then the model of support for the EU in CEE will be presented and hypotheses on the relations within this model will be formulated.

2.2.1 Preliminary contextual information about Central and Eastern Europe

This paragraph defines what is meant by Central and Eastern Europe and what makes countries in this region a homogeneous group and a group different from established democracies in the EU. It is necessary to illustrate the peculiarities of CEE countries because the aim of this study is to develop a model of support for the EU that will be suitable for these countries. These countries’ common characteristics, particularly their newly acquired membership in the EU, give hints as to which factors must be taken into account when developing a model for the CEE context, and why it is reasonable and useful to analyze this group of countries separately from Western European countries. In my study the region of interest consists of all countries that are situated geographically in the central and eastern part of Europe, share a communist past, and joined the EU in May 2004.

In political science literature, the term ‘Central and Eastern Europe’ is used in a broader sense than its strict geographical meaning. Generally, it describes all countries in Europe that were part of the ‘Eastern bloc’ (including the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia) during the Cold War. Until now, almost only countries from Central and Eastern Europe in the geographical sense have joined the EU. Only one country from Southeast Europe and a former member of Yugoslavia became part of the EU in 2004 – Slovenia. The three Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – are the only former Soviet republics that have joined the EU. Compared to the old EU member states, the new ones are small and very small countries according to their population size (except for Poland). All are located on the eastern periphery of the EU-15, which makes the term eastward enlargement quite applicable (that, of course, is inapplicable to Malta and Cyprus) (Beichelt 2004a: 51-53).

Communist past means that all the countries were under communist rule before 1989 and were a part of the Soviet Union or under its control. This is the decisive and distinctive feature of these CEE countries when compared with other
EU member states. These countries are ‘young’ democracies as their transformation from autocratic communist regimes to democratic systems with free markets occurred only recently.\textsuperscript{21} This means that these countries underwent a dual transformation – political and economic: The political transformation is characterized by the change from autocratic to democratic rule, including massive changes in the political institutional framework. The economic transformation includes the replacement of centrally planned economies with market economies. This dual transformation distinguishes these CEE countries from the Southern European countries that joined the EU shortly after their transition to democracy in the 1980s (Greece, Spain, Portugal), and makes the southern and eastward enlargement of the EU not completely comparable. Additionally, after decades of supervision and suppression by the Soviet Union, all the CEE countries experienced a newly gained independence from Soviet rule when they became sovereign states. Moreover, some of the countries had to struggle with a ‘triple’ transformation as they had to create new nation-states because the former multi-ethnic states they were a part of no longer existed. For example, the Baltic countries broke away from the Soviet Union; Slovenia broke away from Yugoslavia; the Czech Republic and Slovakia split into two separate countries. These transformation processes directly preceded these CEE countries’ accession to the EU, so the accession process must be interpreted against this background (overview of transformation processes in CEE: Pridham/Vanhansen 1994, Zielonka/Pravda 2001, Beichelt 2004a, Berglund et al. 2004, Zielonka 2007b, Berend 2009).

The temporal proximity of the transformation processes and the EU accession leads to various associations that the Central and Eastern Europeans must have had when thinking about the EU. The EU-15 was associated with freedom, democracy, and economic prosperity. A successful transformation process and membership in the EU were equated as a return to Europe – a place where Central and Eastern Europeans saw themselves historically. EU membership was desirable for supporters of the transformation processes because it guaranteed that democracy and market economy could not be withdrawn again. The EU and the applicant countries assumed that an eastward enlargement would have the same effect for the new member states that the southern enlargement had for the three Mediterranean countries: a strengthening of their newly democratic regimes and an improvement of their economic situations. Moreover, EU membership would mean the adoption of Western values and Western political and economic systems (cf. e.g. Tsoukalis 1981, Wallace 1990, Jahn 1996, Pollack 2002: 2).

\textsuperscript{21} In this work, transformation is used to describe the change of the political and/or economic system. With reference to the political transformation, it includes the three phases of the democratization process that are distinguished in the literature – liberalization, transition, and consolidation (O'Donnell et al. 1986).
As candidate countries, the new CEE member states had to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria, stating, inter alia, candidate states must be democracies and market economies (cf. Footnote 2). Thus, besides having acquired EU membership, the countries analyzed in this study distinguish themselves from other former Eastern bloc states by being stable democracies with functioning market economies. The former Soviet republics (except for the Baltic States), as well as Southeast European countries like the former Yugoslavian republics (except for Slovenia) or other Balkan countries, either did not apply for EU membership or could not become candidate countries, because they were not fully democratized or they could not fulfill other parts of the Copenhagen criteria at the time the EU decided on the 2004 enlargement (cf. Bertelsmann Stiftung 2004, 2007, Freedom House 2008). The countries analyzed here fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria and therefore, can be considered democracies. But because these countries are ‘young’ democracies and the national political systems play an important role in my model of EU support, it is necessary for my analysis to ensure that all the countries included in the analysis were consolidated democracies during the period under investigation. A secure classification of the countries is not possible based solely on the sketchy Copenhagen criteria alone. Therefore, a classification of the countries according to Freedom House is used to clarify the countries’ status during the period of time considered in this study. Freedom House developed a well-known and reliable measure of a nation-state’s level of democracy based on considerations about political rights and civil liberties. In its annual reports, Freedom House ranks the countries on these two dimensions with ‘1’ meaning free (which can be translated into democratic) and ‘7’ meaning not free (non-democratic). All eight countries have been classified as free countries in the period of interest. All were rated ‘1’ or ‘2’ respectively on each of the two dimensions between 2003 and 2007 (Freedom House 2009). In addition, a rating that reflects the democratic progress in transition countries, also provided by Freedom House, reveals that all eight countries have been consolidated democracies at least since the beginning of the new millennium (Freedom House 2008). Thus, the countries are fully democratized and consolidated, and the functioning of the political system according to democratic rules can be assumed (cf. Pickel/Jacobs 2006: 36, Merkel 2010: 430-431).22

22 However, when applying more far reaching criteria to evaluate consolidation, some countries under investigation still experience some trouble with their consolidation. According to Diamond (1999) or Merkel (2010), the last step of consolidation is the consolidation of the level of the mass public, which is about the attitudes of the citizens. Referring to this, in 2002 Lithuania and Latvia still had problems as large proportions of the population expressed non-democratic attitudes (Fuchs 2007c: 167). Using data from 2005, Merkel’s analysis reveals progresses in the consolidation of the Lithuanian democracy, but he finds...
In summary, the group of post-communist new EU member states is characterized by their transition to democracy and their implementation of market economies, as well as by their recent accession to the EU. These are two decisive factors that distinguish CEE countries from old EU member states. Both factors are important concerning the specification of a model of EU support for CEE because both lead to the main change of Fuchs’ model: the more prominent role of national attitudes serving as shortcuts – a point further described in chapter 2.2.3.5.

2.2.2 Specific EU attitudes as determinants of support for the European Union

From support literature, Fuchs deduced three determinants of EU support, which describe European aspects and can therefore be regarded as specific EU attitudes. These specific EU attitudes – EU systemic performance, EU democratic performance, and European identity – play an important role in explaining EU support in my model as well. Since their position in every support model is clear as it is secured by Fuchs’ model of regime support – they have a direct influence on EU support – further discussion is needed only on the content of the concepts ‘political performance’ and ‘identification with a political community’, and their relevance in a model explaining support for the EU in the Central and Eastern European context.

2.2.2.1 Political performance of the European Union

As noted above, political performance affects support for a political regime. Therefore, the political performance of the EU influences generalized EU support. Transferring Roller’s aforementioned definition of political performance (2005: 20, 2007) to the European context, EU political performance is the evaluation of what European political actors do and the outcomes of their actions. The object of evaluation is not the institutional design of the EU’s political system; it is the democratic political process. EU performance is about a systematic evaluation of the outputs and outcomes from the European system resulting from the activities and decisions of the actors working on the European level, like the European Council, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament, the European Commission, or the European Court of Justice to name the most important ones.

no improvement in Latvia, which is still not fully legitimized on the level of the mass public (2010: 430).
As political performance theoretically can be split into systemic performance and democratic performance, these two dimensions will be examined with reference to the EU in more detail.

EU systemic performance includes any kind of output the EU can generate for its citizens. Such achievements include institutional acts like regulations, directives, and decisions in policy areas in which the EU has the authority to make binding decisions (e.g. policies within the first pillar of the EU covering economic, social, or environmental policies). Besides these decisions that are made under the supranational principle involving the main EU institutions, decisions within the second and third pillars (CFSP and Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters (PJCC), respectively) are made on an intergovernmental basis with the Council of the EU and the European Council as the main actors. The concept of systemic performance reflects the EU’s capability in creating a secure and convenient environment and in providing expected benefits for a country and its citizens (see Fuchs 1998b: 10).

For the concept of systemic performance to be complete, it ought to represent all relevant policy areas in which the EU takes action. Roller presents a list of political goals that a system should fulfill. This list is critically reviewed regarding the EU’s ability to pursue these goals as a supranational system with very special competences. The political goals are international and domestic security, wealth, socio-economic security and equality, and environmental protection (Roller 2005: 29). The order of this list mirrors how political systems gradually broadened their scope in the course of time. The goals of the European system have been steadily expanded from the beginning of European integration until today, and the order of the policies that the EC or EU have gotten involved in closely matches the above list. European integration in the 1950s pursued two goals, namely guaranteeing peace and enhancing economic growth. Therefore, domestic security in terms of European security has played an important role from the beginning of European integration. This is documented in the founding of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSE) in 1951 because cooperation in industries relevant for warfare decreases the possibility of a war between cooperating countries. Today, this goal is documented in the common asylum or immigration policies. Additionally, the wealth rubric, which makes up the eco-

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23 For further information about decision-making processes in the European Union see e.g. Wessels (2003, 2009b). The stated situation describes the organization of the EU, i.e. the pillar structure, which applied during the period of time I am interested in studying. The pillar structure was introduced with the Treaty of Maastricht and was valid until the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon on December, the 1st 2009. With this new treaty, the pillar structure was given up and the decision-making under the supranational principle increased. However, the different degrees of competence of the EU in different policies remain.
conomic dimension, has been part of the European integration from the beginning, as manifested in the founding of the European Economic Community in 1957. This economic integration, which has developed into the most integrated and most influential part of the later EU, still dominates European integration. Cornerstones like the introduction of the Common Market, the implementation of the four freedoms, and the Economic and Monetary Union are proof of the large scope of decision-making competencies of the EU in the economic realm. As integration has deepened, the scope of the EC or EU has expanded to provide socio-economic security and equality by communitizing parts of social policy (e.g. equal treatment of men and women, safety and occupational health, European Works Councils), the right to good administration, consumer protection, and health care or by introducing a European employment policy. Since the nation-states have started to engage extensively in the protection of the environment, the EU has quickly had a say in this area as well. For example, Europe makes decisions on the restriction of emissions, the reduction of water pollution, and the secure handling of chemicals harmful to the environment. Moreover, the EU has formulated the aim of sustainable development in Europe, and the Commission checks political proposals for their environmental sustainability. Lastly, international security has become a part of the European scope even if the EU’s power is clearly restricted. After the French Assembly rejected a first draft on a European Defence Community in 1954, European Political Cooperation (EPC) started in the 1970s. The EPC, which was tied to the EC with the passage of the European Single Act, introduced a system of mutual consultations and reconciliations on diplomatic issues and foreign policies between the member states. Cooperation in foreign policy reached a new stage with the introduction of the CFSP as the second pillar, and the appointment of a High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. The latter represents the EU abroad, together with the president of the European Commission and the president of the European Council, and coordinates foreign and security policies in the Council of the EU. Nevertheless, international security issues continue to be decided on an intergovernmental basis (Fritzler/Unser 2001, Rittberger/Schmimmelpfennig 2005, European Commission 2007, Wessels 2009b).

In the literature on regime support, it is said, that the impact of economic performance is predominant within the systemic performance concept (Fuchs 2003: 32). With reference to the EU, this fact is highlighted. The EU or the EC started as an economic integration project and this policy, which was communitized in early years, is still dominant in political reality and in the thinking of European citizens today. Therefore, one can assume that the evaluation of the EU’s economic performance is very important in evaluating the entire European system. Nevertheless, as European integration today goes far beyond economic issues, the outputs of decisions in other policy areas are relevant as well. What infor-
information citizens use to form an opinion about the systemic performance of the EU depends on their perception of European integration, the reality of their lives, their concerns, and their problems. As the EU is able to act in all fields that a political system should be able to act in – even if its competences vary in the different policy areas – the previously introduced pattern of political goals can be transferred to the EU. The goals indicate what the EU systemic performance is about, and what could be relevant for citizens when thinking about the systemic performance of the EU, which, in turn, can influence the overall evaluation of the European regime.

In contrast, the concept of democratic performance covers the ability of the EU to ensure norms and principles of a liberal democracy. In this case, the EU is evaluated according to the functioning of its democratic framework, such as the effectiveness and responsiveness of the EU institutions, the ability to guarantee fundamental rights like liberty or equality across all member states, and a working justice system (Fuchs 1998b: 10-11, Roller 2004: 303-304). Since the EU is a union of democratic countries sharing democratic values, the EU and its member states support basic democratic principles, and work together on the stability and enhancement of democratic processes within the Union (Laffan 2004, Holzinger 2005, Kaina 2006). Democratic achievements of the EU include the following: the signing of the European Convention on Human Rights by the EU itself; the creation of the European citizenship which includes the right to petition to the EP or to complain to the Ombudsman; and the creation of the European Court of Justice which supervises the rule of law.

Nevertheless, “democratic political processes in the EU are weaker than in the democratic state” (Jachtenfuchs 2007: 168), and the lack of democratic legitimacy for the EU is a problem frequently discussed under the heading ‘democratic deficit of the EU’. In the early years of European integration, the legitimacy of the supranational institutions was not put into question because advantageous outcomes (e.g. peace, wealth) led to the permissive consensus among Europeans. As this consensus gave way to a more skeptical view on European integration, the EU could no longer rely on its policy outputs and outcomes alone in order to legitimize its decisions (Beetham/Lord 1998, Kielmansegg 2003). Before the Single European Act of 1986, European decisions were indirectly legitimized through the Council of Ministers which decided unanimously and through ratification of European legal acts by national parliaments. Problems occurred when this indirect legitimation eroded as the Council started to decide by qualified majority. Since then there can be situations in which a country might oppose an act within the Council, but being overruled by the Council’s majority, still has to implement it domestically. More direct ways of legitimation, i.e. through direct elections of the European Parliament, draw even more criticism because the EP
is restricted in its competences, and thus is not an equal partner with the Council – even if its competences are steadily increasing. Therefore, the direct path of legitimacy could not compensate for the imperfect indirect path. Another serious problem is the indirect legitimation of the European Commission as the executive branch of the EU. The Commission is neither elected directly by European citizens (as the executive in presidential systems) nor does it depend on the results of the elections to the EP and the composition of the EP (as the executive in parliamentary systems) (Beetham/Lord 1998, Holzinger 2005). Besides these most important and most problematic aspects of the democratic deficit, the democratic quality of governance in the European system is deficient in many other ways. Some examples include the lack of transparency in the Council’s decision-making; the lack of citizens’ attachment to the EP which is shown in very low EP election turnouts (Hix 2007b); the perception of EP elections as second-order elections (Reif/Schmitt 1980) by voters and national elites; EP elections without a clear Europe-wide contestation on European issues (Blondel et al. 1998: 15, Marks et al. 2002, Hix 2007b); the non-existence of a European demos which is necessary for accepting collectively binding decisions made by a majority (Weiler 1991, Kielmansegg 2003); and the lack of a European public sphere (e.g. European mass media, European discussions) (Koopmans/Erbe 2003, Downey/König 2006). As this short overview of the democratic deficit reveals (for a more comprehensive discussion see Beetham/Lord 1998, Offe 1998, Scharpf 1999, Holzinger 2005), problems within the democratic institutional framework of the EU and the democratic processes are evident. These problems remain today even though the EU has tried to overcome its lack of legitimacy with every new treaty (Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, and most recently, Lisbon), most notably by reinforcing the powers of the EP by extending the application of the codecision procedure and strengthening the EP’s role in appointing and controlling the Commission (Holzinger 2005: 89-105).

With regards to the concept of democratic performance, the question is whether citizens care about the democratic deficit. If citizens are aware of this deficit and it stands in contrast to their personal values concerning democracy, it may have a negative impact on their overall evaluation of the EU. In his study, “The Democratic Deficit and Mass Support for an EU-wide Government” (2002), Rohrschneider shows that citizens who feel unrepresented, i.e. who perceive a bad EU democratic performance, support the EU to a lesser extent even if their economic perceptions are controlled for. Rohrschneider concludes that studies on EU support must include both types of performance as predictor variables because citizens are aware of the political dimension of the EU and attitudes towards the political dimension are also relevant for overall EU support. This view on attitudes in the post-Maastricht EU-15 is supported by other au-
thors (e.g. Carey 2002: 390, Fuchs 2003). Hence, this dimension of political performance can play a role in determining regime support in the European context.

The relevance of both performance types in explaining EU support is assumed for the Central and Eastern European context as well. The eight countries in my study applied for EU membership in the middle of their transformation process. One reason for this quick application was the hope that the EU would provide help for the successful completion of the political and economic transformation process by granting financial help and know-how or by promising full membership in the near future. In addition, for six out of the eight countries – the three Baltic countries, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Slovenia – the EU helped to stabilize these countries and to secure their newly won independence as they experienced a third transformation towards statehood and sovereignty by gaining independence from multi-ethnic federations. The EU supported democracy and economic growth in this region in order to stabilize CEE and to unify the former East and West, bringing advantages for the whole continent. Against this background, it is assumed that Central and Eastern Europeans see the EU as an organization working for democracy and economic growth, and when evaluating the EU these factors are assumed to come into mind. The systemic and democratic performance of the EU, i.e. the outputs that the European institutions provide for candidate countries, new member states, and their citizens, contribute to the overall evaluation of the EU.

As stated above, evaluations of systemic and democratic performance determine regime support because they are based on generalizations of the performance of various political authorities during a long period of time. Through this generalization, attitudes, originally based on the evaluation of political actors, influence the evaluation of the regime (Easton 1975: 446-447, Fuchs 2003: 32). With reference to systemic performance, the generalized attitudes are guided by an instrumental mode of evaluation. Regarding democratic performance, a value-based, moral mode of evaluation is tied to this attitude. The reason whether or not to support a regime can be driven by instrumental and value-based motives. Altogether, both kinds of performance are cognitive-evaluative attitudes by nature. This distinguishes the concept of political performance from the concept of political identity, which is predominantly an affective attitude, as the discussion in the following paragraph will reveal. By contrast, political performance has no obvious affective dimension. To illustrate, if systemic or democratic performance of the EU – as a kind of specific EU attitude – comes to mind when thinking about the EU, opinion formation is guided by a more rational evaluation based on knowledge or assumptions about the political performance of the EU. Different considerations, such as, ‘does the EU produce advantageous outputs’ or ‘does the European Parliament work for the citizens’ interest’, which rely on something an individual has heard about the work of European political actors,
culminate in an overall evaluation of EU performance. Even if the evaluation does not rely on much information or deep thinking, it is less dependent on affective decisions and gut feelings, especially compared to the concept of political identity.

2.2.2.2 Identification with the European community

Identification with a community – or simply identity – is the other main attitude influencing regime support: if a person identifies with the community that is connected to the regime, support for the regime is higher. The community associated with the EU is the European community, formally consisting of all Europeans within the EU. The EU is supported if a person identifies himself with the European community, or, to put it another way, if European identity is part of a person’s attitude structure. Because European identity is a somewhat complex construct, a systematic elaboration on identity as a social scientific concept and European identity in particular is necessary.

Identity is a concept widely discussed in social psychology (overviews: Turner et al. 1987, Hogg/Abrams 1990, Stets/Burke 2000, Abdelal et al. 2006). Approaches from this field are fruitful for embedding European identity into an appropriate theoretical framework (Angelucci 1993, Kohli 2000, Castano 2004, Herrmann/Brewer 2004, discussion of European identity from a multidisciplinary perspective can be found in Checkel/Katzenstein 2009). In this context, social identity describes the psychological relation of an individual to a social group or community to which he belongs (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 5-6). Tajfel elaborates on a prominent and frequently used definition of social identity. According to him, social identity is “that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel 1981: 255).

In order to use this definition for further considerations, the term ‘individual’s self-concept’ must be clarified. It emphasizes that social identities can be seen as “socially-constructed and socially meaningful categories that are accepted by individuals as descriptive of themselves or their group” (Thoits/Virshup 1997:

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24 I use the terms ‘identification with a community’ and ‘identity’ simultaneously because they are both used to describe the same phenomenon, but only in different research traditions. The first one is mainly used in the literature on political support, while the second one is used in social psychology and EU research. Some authors argue for a conceptual separation for various reasons (e.g. Gerhards 2003: 467, Duchesne/Frognier 2008: 145), but this separation does not prevail in most of the common literature.
106-107). Among the wide range of possible social identities, according to Thoits and Virshup, two groups can be differentiated: ‘me’ identities versus ‘we’ identities. ‘Me’ identities are individual-level identities that “are identifications of the self as a certain kind of person, using broad social categories to describe ‘who I am’. Collective-level we’s are identifications of the self with a group as a whole, using broad social categories to describe ‘who we are’” (Thoits/Virshup 1997: 106). The construct that interests me is – European identity – falls into the second category. It is about the identification of self with other Europeans (‘We are Europeans’). European identity as all other “collective-level we’s [is] derived from cognitive processes of group social comparison, group categorization, and group evaluation” (Thoits/Virshup 1997: 122).

This leads to the second part of Tajfel’s definition, which makes clear that the concept of social identity embraces cognitive, evaluative, and affective aspects. “[B]eyond mere recognition of membership in a social group or category, identification implies that the group and its defining characteristics have become integral to the person’s self-concept, with associated values, emotions, and extensions of individual self-esteem” (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 6, cf. Risse 2001: 201).

The cognitive process underlying the construction of a social identity, i.e. the conscious assigning of an individual to a certain social group, is best described with Turner’s self-categorization theory. He assumes a cognitive process, depersonalization, in which a collective sense is created. “Depersonalization refers to the process of ‘self-stereotyping’ whereby people come to perceive themselves more as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category than as unique personalities defined by their individual differences from others” (Turner et al. 1987: 50). An individual is aware of the existence of a certain social group and he is aware of his membership in this social group, which leads to a self-categorization into this group. This self-categorization is guided by the perception of common characteristics or similarities among the members of a group and of differences to other groups. According to the principle of meta-contrast, an individual sees himself as a member of a group (in-group) if the perceived dif-

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25 I draw a perspective on European identity which emphasizes the individual attitudes towards Europe and the self-categorization of an individual as European because the central aim of this study is to construct an attitude model of EU support. This perspective is called a bottom-up model by Bruter (2005: 5). In contrast, the top-down model assumes objective criteria of who is part of the European community and who is not.

26 In contrast, the individual-level identities – also called role identities (Example: ‘I am a mother’) – “are derived from taking the role of the other and from responding to other’s expectations and reflected appraisals. [...] Me’s provide the person with meaningful, usually positive self-conceptions, and the enactment of these identities helps to maintain the normative social order at the macro level” (Thoits/Virshup 1997: 122).
ferences between himself and the members of this in-group are smaller than the perceived differences between himself and members of other groups (out-groups). There can be differences between self and other members in the in-group but the differences between in-group and out-group are bigger in terms of the content that defines the groups. Self has more resemblance with a prototype of an in-group member than a prototype of an out-group member (Turner et al. 1987: 51-54, cf. Hogg/Abrams 1990: 21, Brubaker/Cooper 2000: 7, 19, Brewer 2001: 117-119). There are no limits regarding the size of the in-group. Such a group can consist of only a few members or many members forming large groups, which only exist as “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006: 5-6) because the members of the group cannot know all the other members. Transferred to the European context, this means that Europeans – despite many differences among them – can categorize themselves as Europeans because they share a common characteristic (‘We are from the same continent, from Europe’ or ‘We are European citizens’), which leads them to be a part of an in-group compared with out-groups like the Americans, Asians, or Africans. A collective European identity will only develop if people from this continent or, more precisely, if citizens of the EU categorize themselves as Europeans because it is this self-categorization, not the mere fact of being from Europe, that makes the crucial difference.27 A self-categorization includes the internalization of the content of group identity like common attributes, symbols, and values describing a prototypical European (Cinnirella 1996: 255, Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 6, Duchesne/Frognier 2008: 144-145).28

27 Strictly speaking, European identity should be distinguished from EU identity. It might be possible that an individual feels like he belongs to Europe – the continent – but not to the EU. Or it might be the other way around. However, “the EU has achieved identity hegemony in the sense that ‘Europe’ increasingly denotes the political and social space occupied by the EU” (Risse 2004: 255, cf. Breakwell 2004). For example, the wish of Central and Eastern Europeans to return to Europe means entering the EU because they had never left Europe, the continent. In many contexts, Europe is used as a synonym for the EU and European identity is generally used to describe the binding to the EU (Laffan 1996, Mayer/Palmowski 2004, Risse 2004: 255). I use European identity according to this sense because I am interested in identity as a predictor of EU support, and this can only be European identity, which is seen as the identification with the EU community as it is described in the literature on support.

28 There is a long, controversial debate about what defines the core of being European. First of all, objective European attributes, i.e. hard facts, can be distinguished from subjective characteristics, i.e. what European identity means to European citizens. In both groups, explanations range from geographical arguments to cultural, ideological, or religious ones to common political institutions or symbols of the EU (Marks 1999, Kohli 2002, Bruter 2003, Mayer/Palmowski 2004, Bruter 2005: 5, Zielonka 2007b: 170-173, for the claim of almost no common characteristics cf. Breakwell 2004). Furthermore, the emergence of such perceived common characteristics can occur in different ways, which makes the situation even more complex. E.g. individuals are aware of pre-existing cultural commu-
The boundary between the in-group and the out-group is based on mere cognitive considerations, but the cognitive comparison of different groups is related to the evaluation of the in-group and other groups. In general, the in-group is evaluated positively compared with other groups because there is a natural need for positive self-esteem that can only be reached if the in-group and self, as a member of this group, are evaluated positively (Turner 1981, 1982).

Besides common characteristics defining the in-group, the group is bound together by common values or emotions. “‘[I]dentity’ is often opposed to ‘interest’ in an effort to highlight and conceptualize non-instrumental modes of social and political action” (Brubaker/Cooper 2000: 6). Social identity can create “attachment, loyalty, and a sense of obligation to the group and group welfare” (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 6). It is this feeling of belonging together that has implications for the collective on the macro-level. This connection is important because it is only when social identity has such an implication that it becomes relevant for the society, and it can influence phenomena on a macro-level (Thoits/Virshup 1997: 122, Fuchs 2007a: 5).

As my interest is in the political context, I concentrate on the influence of identity on attitudes towards the political regime because identity is a source for the acceptance of a political regime (Easton 1967: 171-189, 320-340, Fuchs/Schlenker 2006: 7, cf. as well Laffan 1996, Cerutti 2001, Herrmann/Brewer 2004). I further elaborate on this point because it makes clear why identity can influence support for a political regime, which is one relationship Fuchs identified as relevant in his model of EU support.

According to Herrmann and Brewer, political identities are “identities that lead people to imagine that a group deserves to enjoy substantial sovereignty, that is, ultimate decision-making authority” (2004: 6). In sociological terms, the group that deserves this sovereignty is called political community, which consists of the members of a political system who are – referring again to the above cited definition from Easton – connected to each other “by a political division of labor” (Easton 1967: 177). Like other groups or communities, a political community exists only if the individuals are aware that they are a group, and if they feel that they belong together. This affective moment is the basis for individuals' identities, or, in contrast, economic advantages of behaving like one group. The former leads to a more sentimental attachment, while the latter leads to an instrumental one (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 7-8). There is evidence that Europe or the EU means different things for different people (Breakwell 2004, Bruter 2004). For my purpose the concrete content of a European identity plays no crucial role as I am not interested in explaining European identity. In this study European identity is used as an independent variable explaining EU support and therefore, it is only relevant to discuss whether or not European citizens describe themselves as Europeans and whether they transfer this identity to the EU regime.
to develop loyalty and a sense of obligation to the group, thus making it possible for collective goals to be superior to individual goals. This distinctive “we-feeling or sense of community” (Easton 1967: 185) leads to an acceptance of political institutions or the political regime, and allows for political authorities to come to majority decisions that are accepted by the political community even if the decisions are not approved by all members of the community or if the decisions do not provide direct utilitarian payoffs (Offe 1998: 100-107, Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 6-7).

Since the creation of the EU in 1992, the need for a European identity for the legitimacy of the EU has been widely approved in research on the EU (Niedermayer 1995b, Laffan 1996, Beetham/Lord 1998, Cerutti 2001, Gerhards 2003, Habermas 2003). No consensus prevails regarding the question of whether a collective European identity exists yet, and if not, whether it is even possible for such a collective identity to emerge in the future. Advocates of the no-demos-thesis29 deny the possibility of a European identity (Offe 1998: 119-132, Lepsius 1999, Scharpf 1999: 672-674, Kielmansegg 2003: 56-61). Their main argument is that national identities occur because of long historical processes leading to “Kommunikations-, Erfahrungs- und Erinnerungsgemeinschaften”30 (Kielmansegg 2003: 58) on the national level. As European integration does not parallel this national development, the prerequisites for a collective identity are missing on the European level. Another argument is that boundaries are a crucial part of the concept of collective identities, and since the EU’s border changes steadily, Europeans cannot identify a clear in-group or a clear out-group (Lepsius 1999: 201, Castano 2004: 43-44, Risse 2004: 257-258). Opponents of the no-demos thesis do not deny the EU’s diversity in culture, language, or nations, but “they postulate that a European identity can only be a political identity and only a political identity may be possible” (Fuchs 2007a: 3, cf. as well Fuchs 2000, Cerutti 2003, Kohli 2002, Habermas 2004). The decisive content of such a European political identity would be common political values and therefore, cultural and national diversities would not contradict a collective European identity. Whether such a European identity already exists and whether it can strengthen the legitimacy of the EU, are empirical questions. Fuchs finds in his analysis of the EU-

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29 A demos is defined as an imagined community which is bound by common democratic principles and values. A demos exists if it is formally defined in a constitution, if citizens are aware of this demos and categorize themselves as members of it, and if citizens affectively identify with the demos (Fuchs 2000: 218-220). “What turns people into a demos are not their pre-given cultural features, but, […] the awareness that they have no escape from the necessity and opportunity of shaping together their communal life” (Cerutti 2003: 25-26).

30 Communication-, experience-, and remembrance communities (Translation by the author).
25 that “[c]ontrary to the expectations of many observers the empirical analysis has shown that currently a European identity already exist [sic] and that this European identity is already important for the support of the EU” (Fuchs 2007a: 14). Other studies confirm these results (cf. Marks 1999, Carey 2002, Kohli 2002, Citrin/Sides 2004, Wessels 2007, Caporaso/Kim 2009, for a more skeptical interpretation see Duchesne/Frognier 2008). This means that even in the new member states a European identity has formed to a certain extent. Moreover, Wessels (2007) found a strong negative relationship between European identity and Euroskepticism, which means that European identity is positively related to EU support in this context as well.

European identity in CEE is tightly connected to the phrase ‘returning to Europe’. This phrase adequately describes the Central and Eastern Europeans’ feeling of belonging to the European family. This feeling of belonging to Europe is manifested by the accession to the EU as this step led the Central and Eastern Europeans back to the place where they historically and mentally belonged (Mayer/Palmowski 2004: 590, Whitefield et al. 2006: 187-189). Seen from a cognitive and affective point of view, Central and Eastern Europeans are part of the in-group ‘Europeans’. Consequently, with reaching EU membership, the membership in the in-group ‘Europeans’ was confirmed formally, and the artificial separation from the Cold War was repealed.

To summarize the implications of the considerations on European identity for my model of EU support, this chapter has shown that theoretically and empirically the inclusion of European identity as a direct predictor of EU support is approved. Even if this predictor has a cognitive dimension, the decisive aspect of European identity for EU support is its affective dimension. Identity in the European case is clearly set on an emotional level. It is a non-instrumental standard of evaluation (Brubaker/Cooper 2000: 6, Fuchs 2003: 33), comprising of affections and feelings in the opinion formation process. This is why this predictor embraces an aspect other than political performance, which constitutes a more evaluative knowledge-based predictor of support.

Political performance and political identity are both important predictors of EU support, but they are so different in their nature that it makes sense to treat these attitudes separately in the following chapters. This proceeding is supported by considerations on regime support in which both aspects are seen differently and by considerations on EU research where this difference is made as well (Fuchs 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Hence, when elaborating on national attitudes as additional determinants of support for the EU, the separation of cognitive-evaluative attitudes and affective-driven attitudes remains, and this also guides the argumentation about the inclusion of additional determinants into a model of EU support.
2.2.3 National attitudes as additional determinants of support for the European Union

2.2.3.1 Need for additional determinants

As stated above, before the Maastricht Treaty, legitimacy for the then-EC was either based on economic calculus or on indirect legitimacy via national governments, which decided unanimously in the European Council and the Council of Ministers. After transferring more competences that go beyond the economic realm to the newly-created EU and after implementing majority voting in the Council, it became clear that the EU was a political object that needed support for its own sake. That meant, European integration had developed into a political system, and this new structure as well as the growing influence of the EU had to be somehow reflected in the citizens’ attitudes towards that system and its various parts. Indeed, following this political development the permissive consensus, which had characterized the attitudes of ordinary citizens towards the EU for decades (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970), gave way to more critical orientations among the European citizens (Niedermayer 1995a, Eichenberg/Dalton 2007, Hix 2007b). Scholars had to revise existing models for explaining support for European integration. Firstly, the object of interest changed slightly for a political system even if for a political system sui generis. Henceforward, the EU has depended on support by its citizens, just like all other democratic political systems. Thus, studying support for the new system has become even more relevant, spawning new and extensive research on this topic. Secondly, the relationship of the citizens with the new design of European integration has gotten more complicated as the permissive consensus vanished. It is assumed that new bases of legitimacy have developed and research on explaining support for European integration or the European Union has to react by creating theoretically meaningful models of support.

The discussion started with the fundamental question on whether it was actually possible to analyze support for a European system because it was assumed that citizens were not too aware of the integration process and of the EU in early years. “The issue of integration may be too difficult, too abstract or not interesting enough for the average citizen to form a well thought-out attitude” (Janssen 1991: 467). With reference to this and other findings (e.g. Inglehart 1970), Wessels put the issue in a nutshell: “One of the necessary conditions of support for the EC is that awareness of it as a political object is strong enough to develop an attitude towards it” (1995a: 108). Empirical surveys on European issues (like the Eurobarometer) indicate that the EU in general is known by its citizens, and that citizens are able to give an opinion on the EU since they are able to answer questions in surveys. The question that comes up is how this support can be explained
given that general judgments of the EU are probably not based on well-developed reasons. Even if citizens are able to evaluate the EU in general, this does not necessarily mean that these evaluations result from well-reasoned attitudes towards more specific EU objects. In the course of this discussion, research on EU support has concluded that the bulk of existing explanatory models are too demanding (Anderson 1998: 572-573). Economic calculus models, which were predominant before 1992, explain support using determinants resulting from calculations on the basis of real or perceived cost and benefits from European integration for individuals or their nation-states. From a pocketbook or sociotropic point of view, positive perceptions of the economy increase support for the EU (Gabel/Palmer 1995, Gabel 1998b, c). What these models have in common is that they assume citizens to be well-informed and in a position to evaluate the economic consequences of European integration for themselves or their country. It is questionable whether such models capture the attitude structure of the majority of the citizens because a large segment of the population lacks even rudimentary knowledge of the EU, never mind knowledge of economic issues (Sinnott 1997, Hobolt 2007). Therefore, it is argued that other sources of support or opposition to the EU play an important role for ordinary citizens with little awareness of the EU to form opinions about the EU (Anderson 1998, McLaren 2002, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Therefore, research on the EU has tried to solve this problem by developing new considerations about support for the EU, which account for the low levels of awareness and knowledge among citizens concerning EU matters.

2.2.3.2 Research on support for the European Union: National attitudes as cognitive heuristics

This new research strand on EU support elaborates upon the assumption that citizens, who are uninformed about the EU, use so-called cognitive heuristics (also labeled as judgmental shortcuts, proxies, rules of thumb, or political cues) to develop attitudes towards this distant and complex political object. This assump-

31 The terms ‘heuristic’ and ‘shortcut’ can be used interchangeably (cf. e.g. Lawrence 2003: 1, Redlawsk 2004: 595). Both terms dominate the cognitive psychological literature, which is integrated into EU research in my study. Therefore, it is appropriate to maintain established terminology from the original field of research. I use both terms – heuristic and shortcut– synonymously in this work. The term ‘proxy’ is not used because Anderson’s proposal (1998) did not prevail in the literature and was eventually given up by him as well. ‘Cue’, a common term in EU literature but infrequently used in cognitive psychological research, is omitted so as not to inflate the use of different expressions describing the same thing.
tion follows a general concept that people use judgmental shortcuts to draw inferences from simple information like preexisting political considerations or values stored in their memories to evaluate new or unknown objects (Anderson 1998, Lupia et al. 2000a: 17, Kuklinski/Quirk 2001: 294, Hooghe/Marks 2005).

This concept, borrowed from cognitive psychological research, has been incorporated into the study of attitudes towards the EU. Possible shortcuts relevant in this field include political ideologies, identification with political parties, or other shortcuts coming from the domestic arena because such national attitudes are “more firmly held and extensively developed political beliefs” (Anderson 1998: 575, cf. as well Hooghe/Marks 2005).

Whereas the relevance of shortcuts in models of EU support is explained by the citizens’ low awareness and knowledge of the EU, this says little about the nature of possible and appropriate judgmental shortcuts. Theory-driven empirical studies dealing extensively with shortcuts as factors explaining EU support have found that attitudes towards the nation-state are relevant and appropriate shortcuts. Among these well-conducted studies, some explain the relevance of national attitudes theoretically. Trying to classify these theoretical considerations, two central arguments for the integration of national attitudes into a model of EU support can be found (cf. Anderson 1998, Kritzinger 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). The first argument targets the nature or character of the European Union as a multi-level system. Because of the connection between the European and national level, national attitudes are relevant for the evaluation of the EU. The second argument deals with the distance between the EU and its citizens and the reality of their lives. It is assumed that opinion formation with regard to such a distant political system is influenced by attitudes towards the national system because these more firmly held national attitudes help to form opinions about distant systems. I further elaborate on these two arguments to show that the treatment of national attitudes as heuristics in research on support for the EU is necessary and important because of the multi-level structure of the EU and its distance from its citizens.

The EU is a multi-level system – a system of governance that involves and combines regional, national, and supra-national, i.e. European, elements. Thinking about the EU as a multi-level system is a result of the new structure implemented by the Maastricht Treaty. The EU nowadays is seen as a political system, and the focus of research has changed from explaining the integration process to explaining the functioning of the European political system (Bache/Flinders 2004). The starting point was the recognition that the EU “neither resemble[d] domestic polities nor international organizations, and therefore defie[d] explanation from approaches applied either to politics within states or politics between states” (Bache/Flinders 2004: 1). Multi-level governance was a term used to describe a certain policy, namely EU structural policy, and was defined by Marks...
as a “system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers” (Marks 1993: 392). Within multi-level governance, “supranational, national, regional, and local governments are enmeshed in territorially overarch- ing policy networks” (Marks 1993: 402-403). In the subsequent years, the term has quickly come to be used to describe the EU, its decision-making processes, and its structure more generally. According to Bache and Flinders, “‘[m]ulti-level’ refer[s] to the increased interdependence of governments operating at different territorial levels, while ‘governance’ signal[s] the growing interdependence between governments and non-governmental actors at various territorial levels” (2004: 3, cf. as well Holzinger 2005, Jachtenfuchs 2007).

I concentrate on the interdependencies between the national and European territorial tier in order to explain the relevance of national attitudes for support for the European system. The interdependence of governments at the national and the European level that are found in reality may be reflected in the attitude structure of citizens as well.

To understand why the multi-level structure is likely to influence the thinking of ordinary citizens about the EU, this structure, especially the institutional design of the highest tier, has to be explained in more detail. On the European level several institutions have been implemented. Apart from national governments, genuine European institutions, like the European Parliament, the European Commission, or the European Court of Justice, act on the European level. Because this level is regarded as a political system, classifications from comparative politics can be used to describe the European system (Lijphart 1999: 42-47, Holzinger 2005, Hix 2007b, Wessels 2009b). The EU system is made up of a set of institutions quite similar to a national democratic design. The most important institutions that make up the three different branches of power can roughly be identified. The European Commission, which is a government and a bureaucracy, constitutes the executive branch. Additionally, it has an important legislative competence, namely, the right of initiative. The Commission is appointed by the Council and must be approved by the EP. The EP and the Council of the EU are a part of the legislature. The EP shares legislative powers and budgetary powers with the Council. In some policy areas where the codecision procedure applies, the powers of the EP and the Council are equal; however, in other policy areas the Council is superior. The EP has control over the Commission since it has the power to approve and dismiss the Commission. Members of the EP are directly elected in all member states; therefore, they represent the citizens of the EU. The Council is the main decision-making institution. It represents the member states because it is composed of ministers from the national governments. The European Court of Justice forms the judiciary. It ensures compliance with the law when treaties are interpreted and applied. An institution that is rather difficult to classify is the European Council. According to the Treaty on European Union “[t]he
European Council shall provide the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and shall define the general political guidelines thereof" (Treaty on European Union 2008). It acts ‘above’ day-to-day politics and it does not enact legislation. It is a regular meeting of the heads of state and government of the member states; i.e. it is composed of national political actors. Until the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Council was not considered an official EU institution (for comprehensive descriptions of the institutional design of the EU see Hix 2005, Wessels 2009b).

As this short description of the institutions points out, the most obvious entanglement between the European and national level can be found within the Council of the EU and the European Council. Within the Council of the EU, members of the national executive, the lower tier, form a legislative body on the highest tier. Within the European Council, the heads of state and government of the nation-states define and formulate the guidelines for the European level. Therefore, the same political actors operate on both levels. In addition to this amalgamation, other connections between the two layers exist on the institutional level. For example, the heads of state and government in their function as the European Council nominate the president of the European Commission, who is eventually approved by the EP. The members of the EP are elected in national elections, i.e. there are no European party lists and only national politicians run in these elections in each nation-state. Regarding the administrative level of the European system, national civil servants participate in various committees working for the Council of the EU or for the European Commission, and they directly influence European decision-making. Beyond mere institutional interdependencies between the European and the national level, interdependencies concerning the participation of citizens on the European level also exist. European elections are called second-order elections because generally they are influenced more by domestic considerations than by EU politics, meaning that national issues and national political characters play a more important role than European issues and politicians (Reif/Schmitt 1980, Franklin et al. 1995, Van der Eijk/Franklin 1996). The same holds true for referendums concerning European issues. In several member states, referendums on important European treaties are required by law or are held optionally. Such referendums ask for decisions influencing the European level, even if the citizens may make their decisions on the basis of domestic considerations. In such cases, the interdependency between both levels is especially evident because a decision made by the people of a single nation-state can influence the future of the whole Union. An example is the French and Dutch ‘No’ against the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe; a certain political behavior in two member states affected politics on the European level and left the European institutions with new problems. This example makes clear that the multi-level structure exhibiting the interdependency between the European and
the lower level pervades the whole system. In such a system, no level can make decisions independently from the other level. The European level and all member states are closely and almost irrevocably connected because they are all operating under the roof of the EU, meaning that only leaving the EU would restore full independence to a member state (Holzinger 2005: 136-150). A particularity of the European multi-level system is that “democratic politics in the EU is ‘upside down’ [...] where citizens, parties, politicians, and the media are primarily interested on the electoral battles for national political office and only secondarily concerned with the battles for European political office” (Hix 2007b: 144).

It is likely that the interdependency existing in political reality also shows up in the attitude structure of European citizens, meaning that attitudes towards different layers in a multi-level system are somehow interwoven and are not strictly separated. First and foremost, this concerns attitudes towards political actors operating on one or both levels and actions taken by these actors. It can be argued that EU politicians or politicians in EU member states simultaneously work on one or both levels to solve European and national political problems (Holzinger 2005: 140-142). Both levels try to reach similar aims, like ensuring peace and security, as well as ensuring democratic and free market structures. Because of the entanglement of the European and the national level, ordinary citizens often cannot comprehend what level is responsible for what political output. Therefore, a separate evaluation of the outputs of both levels is difficult for them. Furthermore leading national politicians are responsible for tasks within European institutions. They actively participate and co-determine EU politics through these tasks. This gives the impression that the nation-states and their leading political actors are also the dominant actors on the European stage. This makes it highly complicated for ordinary citizens to distinguish between these two important levels of decision-making (see Anderson 1998, Ehin 2001, Kaltenthaler/Anderson 2001, Fuchs 2003, Kritzinger 2003, Christin 2005).

The second argument explaining why it is straightforward to use national attitudes as shortcuts when evaluating the EU deals with the EU as a remote and distant political object in the eyes of ordinary citizens. With remoteness or distance, I mean that the system “appears removed from domestic political reality” (Anderson 1998: 574) and that the system only gets little attention from ordinary citizens despite its objectively far-reaching political competences. To put it simply: The EU is too far away from European citizens’ everyday lives.

People seldom experience direct contact with EU institutions or politicians working for the EU. This is not different from domestic politics where direct contact is unusual as well. But as the media concentrate on domestic politics, EU politics is oftentimes neglected. Media content analyses show that only a small share of the political news on TV or in national newspapers deals with the EU or European integration during ‘normal’ times. For example, Peter, Semetko and
De Vreese showed that less than 4 percent (in Denmark, 10 percent) of the stories in the evening news in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK dealt with the EU in the year 2000 (Peter et al. 2003: 313-314). When something important happens in the EU, like an EP election, a referendum, or the launch of the Euro, news coverage increases. De Vreese and his colleagues found that about 10 percent of the television news in the EU-25 dealt with the EU in the two weeks before the EP election in 2004. Cross-national variation is significantly high. For the countries that interest me, media coverage ranges from over 20 percent in Slovakia to under 5 percent in the Czech Republic (De Vreese et al. 2006: 487). Therefore, the European people cannot see, hear, or read much about the EU in the news. People do not get much EU information, unless they seek it actively – yet it is unlikely that people make this effort. Additionally, European institutions do not contribute much to opening up the EU to its citizens either. For example, the Council, one part of the European legislature, is the only legislature in the democratic world that makes its decisions in secret (Hix 2007b: 152).

The distance between the European project and the people of Europe is a legacy of the EC’s history as an elite project; this gap has hardly narrowed since and is unlikely to narrow much in the near future. The creation of the EU and other important events of European integration, such as different enlargement waves, the creation of the Schengen area and the Euro zone, brought the EU closer to its citizens; these events brought European citizenship, European passports, and for some but not all, a common currency. Nevertheless, these developments only raise citizens’ awareness of the EU sporadically; in the intervening time, ordinary citizens do not pay much attention to the EU. They are not aware “that many regulations in their daily lives are EU rules more often than not” (Risse 2004: 261). The EU and its politicians may try to arouse more interest but if the media do not provide ample coverage of the EU, people will remain in the dark, and the distance and remoteness of the EU will persist.

In addition, the complexity of the European system accounts for the distance. The system appears to be complex because its institutional design has some uncommon characteristics and it is still under construction (Anderson 1998: 574). The institutional design, shortly described above, is structured in a way that takes time to understand. “It is clear that the complex multilayered nature of European governance is less transparent and accountable than the more simple structures known in nation-states” (Zielonka 2007b: 165). If something is difficult to understand, few citizens are willing to invest time and energy to learn more about it in order to reduce the remoteness of that object. Furthermore, the EU is not a static system at all. New treaties have brought and will continue to bring changes to the nature and role of the system. For instance, the tasks of institutions are reformulated, new political positions and institutions are created, and more and more competences are transferred to the EU level. This changing nature makes it
difficult for citizens to keep up with the development and to possess updated information because knowledge can quickly become obsolete. Citizens would have to continuously follow the integration process, which is too time-consuming. It is likely that the remoteness of the European system will remain due to this fact.

This remoteness or distance leads to a low awareness of the EU, which can be seen in the lack of knowledge and the lack of interest in the EU. Many citizens do not possess strong opinions about the EU, so they need help when they are forced to give statements about European issues. Research on remote political objects has shown that attitudes towards known political objects can serve as judgmental shortcuts. The most important and best known political object is the nation-state. Therefore, attitudes towards the national political system and its various parts can help to form opinions about any remote political object. For example, in the American context it is proven that Americans use attitudes towards domestic politics, which is quite familiar to them, to evaluate a remote issue like foreign politics (Popkin/Dimock 2000). The same logic applies to European citizens. They use well-known information about national political systems to evaluate the remote and distant European system or its parts (Anderson 1998, Tverdova/Anderson 2004, Hooghe/Marks 2005).

To conclude, because of the interdependence of the national and the European level and the distance and remoteness of the EU, it is a straightforward and reasonable process for ordinary citizens to use attitudes towards the better known national level as shortcuts for evaluating the European level. This theoretically plausible assumption found its way into theory-driven empirical studies. These empirical studies show that the theoretically useful extension of determinants for EU support by attitudes towards the nation-state is confirmed by data as well. The most important results are presented in the following paragraphs.

On an explorative descriptive basis, Martinotti and Stefanizzi (1995) worked on the relationship between national attitudes and European attitudes. They come to the conclusion that there is a connection between the citizens’ orientations towards their national system and their attitudes towards the European project. On the basis of Eurobarometer data from 1975 to 1993, they find that “the legitimacy of internationalized governance depends as much on what happens within the nation-states as on what happens between them” (Martinotti/Stefanizzi 1995: 189).

The first convincing effort to include national attitudes into a model explaining EU support was made by Anderson (1998), who relies on a pre-Maastricht data set from 1990. He starts with the assumption that apart from the economic

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foundations of support for European integration, attitudes towards domestic politics are related to European support as well. He describes the need for his extended model: “Because it is likely that few citizens possess the kind of cognitive structures that are required for the level of information processing that many economic models presume, I expect that people fill their knowledge gaps by using proxies when responding to queries about the integration process” (Anderson 1998: 574). These proxies, or shortcuts, come from the domestic context because knowledge about the nation-state is larger than knowledge about foreign topics. Anderson identifies three different shortcuts: (1) Support for the national system because the EU’s institutional design resembles the national branches of government, and thus, EU support can mirror attitudes towards political institutions in general. (2) Support for the national government as a main actor within the EU’s institutional framework because the national governments are visible when working on the European level, e.g. in the news about Council meetings. (3) Support for established parties because the EU can be treated as a political issue, which can be a part of the competition among parties on the domestic level where it is said that established parties support the EU while new parties oppose integration (Anderson 1998). His multivariate regression analysis shows that national attitudes have an effect on support for European integration and the effect of economic attitudes declines if it is controlled for domestic factors. To sum it up, Anderson (1998) has highlighted the necessity of the inclusion of political attitudes rooting in the domestic arena into future models of EU support.

In the wake of Anderson’s study, more and more researchers have included various national attitudes as determinants into models explaining support for the EU in general, for various policies or for European integration, and into models explaining the outcome of referendums on EU issues. They emphasize that the performance of the nation-state in its democratic (Rohrschneider 2002, Karp et al. 2003, Kritzinger 2003, McLaren 2004) and systemic (Fuchs 2003, Kritzinger 2003) dimension can influence EU support. More specifically, the relevance of attitudes towards national governments or the incumbent party in particular (Franklin et al. 1994, Franklin et al. 1995, Gabel 1998c, Sanchez-Cuenca 2000, Ray 2003a) is highlighted as well as the role of national parties or national elites (Franklin et al. 1994, Wessels 1995b, Gabel 1998c, Steenbergen/Jones 2002, Ray 2003b, Hooghe/Marks 2005, Gabel/Scheve 2007, Hobolt 2007). A more abstract example is Caldeira and Gibson’s finding that political values generally learnt in the national context can be relevant (1995).

32 He does not distinguish between support for integration and support for the then implemented European system (the EC); instead, he has the same understanding of support as I have in my study.
The important role of national attitudes as shortcuts can be regarded as a solid finding proven by a multitude of empirical studies. It is obvious that most of these relevant national attitudes deal with the political system or its political actors, which is reasonable if seen in combination with one of the theoretical reasons that explain the role of national attitudes as shortcuts: the structure of the European system as a multi-level system, and the role of national systems and national actors in that European system.

The concept of domestic attitudes working as heuristics was transferred to the Central and Eastern European context as well. It was again Anderson, in collaboration with Tverdova, who systematically worked on support for the EU in CEE with an explicit emphasis on the influence of national attitudes (Tverdova/Anderson 2004). They claim that “there is little theoretical or empirical reason to believe that the fundamental factors driving mass opinions about the EU as an object would be completely dissimilar in East and West” (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 187). They use data from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, and Slovakia collected in 1996; thus, EU membership was still years away for these countries and it was unlikely that citizens at the time showed much interest in searching for information about the EU. Therefore, they hypothesize that citizens from that region “rely on so-called heuristics (or cognitive shortcuts) to judge the question of prospective membership in the Union” (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 188). Theoretically, they identify three different heuristics: attitudes toward the economic and political transition, party cues, and views on ties with other countries. Their results show that attitudes towards the economic performance of the nation-state, or more specifically, attitudes towards free market reforms implemented in the respective country serve as shortcuts. In contrast, political performance of the nation-state has no effect. Unexpectedly, they find that party cues only have a small effect. They speculate that this is due to the volatile party systems in CEE countries, where it is difficult for citizens to know the stance of political parties towards the EU – assuming parties have fixed points of views at all. Another reason is that most parties agreed on the European issue supporting future membership; thus, no differing messages were sent to the public. A last finding: Citizens with positive views on ties with other countries are more supportive than citizens without such views. In this case, it does not matter with what countries these ties exist; generally, it is the more cosmopolitan view that matters. Nevertheless, overall utilitarian factors related directly to the EU explain support for or opposition to membership in the EU better than heuristics. Tverdova and Anderson conclude that over the period under investigation “EU membership appears to be viewed by citizens in Central and East European countries as more of an economic and foreign policy issue than anything else” (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 206).
In subsequent studies on CEE, the use of other shortcuts when evaluating the EU in general, future membership, or European integration was proven. Among the domestic factors, democratic or economic performance, and, more specifically, successful transition politics, affected EU support (Cichowski 2000, Tucker et al. 2002, Arki 2004, Christin 2005, Whitefield et al. 2006). Support for the national government and the incumbents also proved influential (Ehin 2001, Fidrmuc/Doyle 2005). In contrast to Tverdova and Anderson, other authors found a stronger independent effect of party cues (Cichowski 2000).

All in all, a majority of the studies approves the use of national attitudes as shortcuts for the evaluation of EU support. This assumption is proven by a positive relationship between national and European attitudes, whereby it is theoretically assumed that national attitudes develop temporally prior to European attitudes because they are – by nature – shortcuts, which influence the thinking about distant and complex EU aspects.

Nevertheless, there are studies suggesting a negative relationship between national and European attitudes. These findings are limited to particular groups of national attitudes: variables dealing with national institutions and national political performance. For example, Sanchez-Cuenca detected that “the worse citizens’ opinion of national institutions and the better their opinion of supranational ones, the stronger their support for European integration” (2000: 169). Kritzinger presented a detailed analysis of national attitudes’ influence on European attitudes in four big member states (Germany, France, Italy, and the UK) in 1994. She found evidence of increased support for the European integration process due to negative views on political performance of the nation-state. On the other hand, more specific support for European institutions is linked to positive attitudes towards national political factors. She concluded that citizens “respond only to the performance of the nation-state and do not judge the performance of the EU independently. Since citizens do not distinguish between the two levels, the integration process did not shape independent views and autonomous evaluations. The context of the nation-state dominates citizens’ evaluations” (2003: 231). In her opinion, the EU is seen as a possible escape from a badly functioning nation-state – even without knowing much about the EU. The EU is simply taken as an uncharted savior (Kritzinger 2003, similar for the CEE context: Fölsz/Töka 2006, Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006, Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006b, Rohrschneider/Loveless 2007).

These results, which contradict the assumption that national attitudes are used as shortcuts and that such shortcuts are positively connected to the issue for which they are shortcuts, provoke skepticism towards a very general concept of national attitudes serving as shortcuts for European issues. Inconsistent empirical findings can occur due to several reasons: slightly different dependent variables (e.g. support for the EU versus support for European integration); the kind of na-
tional attitudes seen as shortcuts (e.g. political versus economic attitudes versus party cues); the measurement of these independent and other control variables (e.g. measuring economic performance from a sociotropic or pocketbook perspective); the countries included in the analyses (e.g. single-case studies versus pooled analyses; all established member states versus big member states only); the time analyzed (e.g. before or after Maastricht). This highlights the fact that the selection of the time period and the countries analyzed, as well as the selection and measurement of the dependent and independent variables are of great importance if one wants to come to reliable and generalizable conclusions.

Apart from these considerations concerning the empirical testing of the theoretical assumptions made on the role of shortcuts in the broad field of EU support, taking a look at the research in cognitive psychology on opinion formation in general and on distant and remote political objects in particular is a useful and necessary step in developing a coherent general model on EU support. The following chapters will deal with cognitive psychological assumptions, and try to combine two research traditions – cognitive psychology and research on the EU – to build an attitude model of support for the EU.

2.2.3.3 Cognitive psychological research: Cognitive heuristics

In political science an interest in cognitive psychology was revived in the early 1990s. Many publications on public opinion research – by political scientists as well as cognitive psychologists – that were published in the last two decades document this new or revived interest (cf. Ferejohn/Aldrich 1990, Sniderman et al. 1991, Zaller 1992, Lupia et al. 2000b, Kuklinski 2001, 2002). In his review article’s headline Sniderman classified this new emphasis as “The New Look in Public Opinion Research” (1993). He argued that while recent research is tied to classical studies (like Campbell et al. 1960, Converse 1964), indeed, a change in important underlying assumptions has taken place. According to Sniderman, classical research was characterized by the paradigm of minimalism, meaning that the public showed “(1) minimal levels of political attention and information; (2) minimal mastery of abstract political concepts such as liberalism-conservatism; (3) minimal stability of political preferences; (4) and quintessentially, minimal levels of attitude constraint” (Sniderman 1993: 219). The focus of classical research was in detecting this minimalism for different political issues and interpreting its influence on the citizens’ stance towards politics. In newer research, minimalism is not denied, but the focus has changed. New research centers not so much on discovering minimalism, but more on the question of how ordinary citizens form opinions under this condition. A prominent and, in fact, the most common answer to this question is that citizens use cognitive heu-
ristics or judgmental shortcuts to overcome their informational deficits and disinterest (Sniderman 1993: 220-221).

This modern view is taken up in my study as the previous chapter has shown the relevance of such shortcuts in the European context. As there are a number of relevant national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics and there are contradicting findings about the relevance of some of these attitudes, a systematic approach to the role of cognitive heuristics in the opinion formation process of ordinary citizens is necessary. I will concentrate on two steps in this process in detail because they are the most important for my considerations: the storage of information and the expression of opinions. To understand the whole process and the aforementioned steps a short description of the working of memory is necessary. Then I will elaborate on the concept of cognitive heuristics and their role in the opinion formation process.

Generally, the opinion formation process in politics covers the whole process “through which information is perceived, processed, stored, retrieved, and finally used to form evaluations of political objects” (Lachat 2007: 47, similar Zaller 1992: 42-51, Wyer/Ottati 1993). “[T]he treatment of thinking as information processing” (Lodge/Stroh 1993: 230) – a dominant view since the beginning of the ‘new look’ era – makes it possible to model the single steps in this process and to depict the presumed occurrences from perceiving information to expressing an opinion, even if these steps of mental activity cannot be observed directly (Lodge/Stroh 1993, McGuire 1993, Sullivan et al. 2002). Two steps in the whole opinion formation process are discussed in detail to provide the necessary background information for understanding the use of heuristics. First, it is important to explain how information is stored in long-term memory so as to identify the relation between a shortcut and the object the shortcut is used to evaluate. Second, the ultimate step of retrieval and expression of the formed opinion must be described in order to understand the role of shortcuts when an individual is asked to express an opinion about a remote and complex object.

Information is stored in long-term memory, which is a very large permanent memory. In contrast, the short-term or working memory, which is only a small and temporary memory, is the place where information is processed and expressed at the end. The two components make up an individual’s memory and play a crucial role in opinion formation. Long-term memory is often described as an associational network, which highlights the fact that information is not stored independently and uncoupled from other information but organized in patterns and structures (Lodge/Stroh 1993: 232, cf. as well Steenbergen/Lodge 2003: 127-129, Schoen 2006: 90-91).

According to Lodge and Stroh these patterns can be captured as a network of ‘nodes’, which are connected via ‘links’. A node can represent any concept, may it be a person, an object, an attribute, a trait of a person or object, or a completely
abstract concept. The different stored nodes are of different importance to an indi
vidual. Some nodes are important, while others are not. This importance or ‘node strength’ is responsible for the probability with which a node is being activated and transferred to the working memory where it influences the expression of an opinion. In addition to the content of a node (e.g. the person or the object stored), which is cognitively driven, a node can be affectively laden, which means that a node can be associated with a positive or negative evaluation (Lodge/Stroh 1993). For example, when a person thinks of Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, the former Latvian president, she constitutes a node in this person’s long-term memory, and this person either evaluates her positively or negatively.

The links, which connect different nodes to each other, feature different characteristics as well. First, a link is characterized by its implicational relation, which describes whether two nodes are positively or negatively associated. Imagine that the node ‘Vīķe-Freiberga’ is linked to the node ‘European Union’. A positive relation would mean that a person thinks Mrs. Vīķe-Freiberga is in favor of the EU; a negative relationship indicates that she is perceived to be in opposition to the EU. Second, the link between two nodes can vary in its strength of association. This so-called belief strength defines the probability with which, if one node is activated, another linked node is activated, too. The stronger the relationship, the more likely the two nodes are transferred to working memory together. In my example, a strong positive link between Mrs. Vīķe-Freiberga and the EU would indicate that a person strongly associates Mrs. Vīķe-Freiberga with the EU, and if the person thinks of Mrs. Vīķe-Freiberga, he almost automatically thinks of the EU as well. Furthermore, the strength of the link shows how closely the nodes are linked. With respect to my example, a strong positive link between Mrs. Vīķe-Freiberga and the EU would indicate that a person recognizes the former Latvian president as a prototype of a strong supporter of the EU. Altogether, the strength of a link indicates the importance or salience of a link in long-term memory as a network and, in addition, it indicates the intensity of the relation between two nodes. Like the importance of the nodes, the importance of the links can vary, and various links can lose or gain importance depending on how often they are activated in the course of time. If a link is activated on a regular basis, the relation between the associated nodes will remain in long-term memory; if two nodes are seldom activated simultaneously, their link will weaken or wither (Lodge/Stroh 1993, Schoen 2006: 90-91, Lachat 2007: 48-49). To sum up, persons, objects, and concepts are stored in long-term memory in a way that they are associated with each other by links, which can vary in importance. If a node is activated (e.g. during an interview or at a polling station), the linked nodes are activated as well. This activation transfers the information about the contents of, and the feelings towards nodes to the short-term memory, where all this information is processed, retrieved, and expressed.
The short description of the basic conception of memory does not suffice to deduce how shortcuts are used in the opinion formation process, but it gives necessary background information to simplify the understanding of information processing. Particularly, the relation or link of a shortcut to another remote or complex object can be captured with the concept of political schemata.

According to this concept, the memory is made up of so-called schemata, which are stored in long-term memory. “A schema may be defined as a cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes” (Fiske/Taylor 1991: 98). First of all, a schema contains information about or knowledge of a certain concept; concepts can be persons, objects, or abstractions – as has been stated above. Regarding the political context, persons can have schemata for different political actors or political concepts and the list of specific schemata is long and indefinite. For example, a Latvian may have a Vīķe-Freiberga schema, a People’s Party schema, a parliament schema, an environmental politics schema, a communism schema and so forth. A schema can contain global categories and more specific or differentiated subcategories, which help to comprehend and structure information about objects in the respective schema (e.g. a parliament schema includes parliaments as a global category, and specific parliaments, like the Latvian Saeima or the European Parliament, as subcategories) (Hamill/Lodge 1986: 70, Lau/Sears 1986: 349, Lau 2003: 30). Besides the information about a concept, a schema carries the attributes of that concept and the relation or links between the attributes. Therefore, a schema is a cognitive structure, whereby information about a concept, its categories, and its attributes is connected to each other, is represented, structured, and sorted. As a schema is a part of long-term memory, the links within a schema can vary with respect to their strength, which makes some attributes more important in their relation to the concept than others.

Schemata play an important role in opinion formation as they “guide[…] the processing of new information and the retrieval of stored information” (Conover/Feldman 1984: 96) and moreover, they “also influence which inferences are made when some information is missing or ambiguous” (Lachat 2007: 51, cf. as well Fiske/Taylor 1991: 121). Thinking within such schemata or categories helps to simplify a complex world, and helps to form opinions about remote and com-

33 According to McGraw, the schema concept is a big advantage because “it fits nicely with a set of existing constructs” (2000: 810), with which political scientists are dealing, such as attitude or belief system. The latter is defined by Converse as “a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence (1964: 207). Both constructs similarly describe that memory is structured, and they imply that this structure can vary between individuals; a point further discussed in chapter 3.2.
plex objects because individuals can find relations to known objects stored in their structured long-term memory. If a remote or complex object is to be evaluated, information stored in the same schema can be activated and used to help evaluate the unknown object (Lau/Sears 1986, Fiske/Taylor 1991: 121-141, McGraw 2000, MacKuen 2002, for a critical view on the schema concept see Kuklinski et al. 1991).

The line of argumentation leads to questions about the concrete activation of information stored in a so-structured long-term memory, the transfer of this information to short-term memory, and its use when eventually forming an opinion about an object.

Cognitive psychology research states that human beings can form their opinions in different ways. According to a dichotomy introduced by Eagly and Chaiken (1993), one can distinguish systematic processing from heuristic processing. Systematic processing can be understood as “comprehensive, analytic orientation to information processing in which perceivers access and scrutinize a great deal of information for its relevance to their judgment task” (Eagly/Chaiken 1993: 326). In contrast, “heuristic processing is conceptualized as a more limited mode of information processing that requires less cognitive effort and fewer cognitive resources than systematic processing” (Eagly/Chaiken 1993: 327, cf. as well Lieberman et al. 2003: 684, Barker/Hansen 2005: 320-321, for a similar model which is often referred to see Petty and Cacioppo’s “Elaboration Likelihood Model” 1986).

Since Converse’s seminal work “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics” (1964), it is known that citizens’ knowledge of political objects or concepts is limited, and attitudes are badly structured or even inexistent. This finding has been confirmed in many subsequent studies and can be regarded as an assured finding studied in the paradigm of minimalism. Moreover, it has never really been challenged in recent research (see e.g. Zaller 1992, Bartels 1996, Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996, Lupia/McCubbins 1998, Luskin 2002b, Lawrence 2003). Therefore, systematic processing is not a realistic option for ordinary citizens when forming a political opinion. Consequently, scientists started to concentrate on the problem of how people make decisions without being fully informed. Ideas from cognitive psychology about heuristic processing have been adapted and transferred to the political context. The concept of heuristics takes center stage among these considerations. Heuristics are “common judgmental shortcuts that people use to draw complicated inferences from simple environmental cues” (Lupia et al. 2000a: 17). Thus, they are a strategy “for making certain judgments or inferences with considerably less than the complete search for alternatives and their consequences that is dictated by rational choice” (Lau/Redlawsk 2006: 25). Such rules of thumb are adopted by citizens to reach a decision quickly and efficiently within the bounds of cognitive resources.
The concept of heuristics combines two ideas: “(1) neither an organized belief system nor much factual knowledge is necessary to adequate performance; rather, (2) citizens can compensate for their absence by relying on heuristics, or mental shortcuts, to make their decisions” (Kuklinski/Quirk 2001: 294). Even if it is debatable whether heuristics can lead to reasonable or rational judgments, i.e. judgments that are as good as judgments drawn with full information, they are at least a method to come to a judgment (Sniderman et al. 1991: 19, Bartels 1996, Kuklinski/Quirk 2000). When citizens have to come to a decision, they are in a dilemma: on the one hand, they want to make a decision as reasonable as possible, while on the other hand, they want to come to a decision with the least necessary effort (Lupia/McCubbins 1998: 2-6, Lau 2003: 30). Heuristics are a solution to this dilemma, thus most scholars agree that heuristics are useful in transferring “the ordinary citizen from a hopeless incompetent to a reasonably capable participant in democratic politics” (Kuklinski/Quirk 2001: 295, cf. as well Sniderman et al. 1991: 18-20, Popkin 1994: 44, Lupia/McCubbins 1998: 5, Lupia 1994, good review on the state of the art: Kinder 2006).

There are several ways of classifying and categorizing heuristics. A prominent systematization of general psychological heuristics was presented by Tversky and Kahneman. They defined three broad categories of heuristics that humans can rely on to make decisions without being fully informed: 1) availability; 2) representativeness; 3) anchoring and adjustment (Tversky/Kahneman 1974). The availability heuristic states that the ease in calling an issue or event into mind is decisive when coming to a judgment (cf. as well McGraw 2000: 814, Lieberman et al. 2003: 684). Issues, events, or occurrences that are recent, frequent, vivid, and a part of the day-to-day life or published in the mass media, are easy to remember. People’s thinking is influenced by such examples, which they can easily recall from their long-term memory. They have the impression that the specific kind of event that they recall has already occurred more frequently in the past, and therefore, will often occur in the future as well. The use of the availability heuristic can lead to biases and wrong conclusions if the perception of reality is biased towards specific information. For example, human beings overestimate the number of judges in a country because there are so many court shows on TV. The concept is strongly related to agenda-setting and priming. Agenda-setting describes the ability of the mass media to influence what citizens think about, i.e. issues that the mass media cover extensively are likely to become salient and important on the agenda of the citizens using the media. Priming then means that citizens use these issues, which are important to them, to evaluate their environment. Here is an example from the political context: If the media report extensively on the economic situation in a country during an election campaign, it is likely that citizens use this political issue – the economic situation – to evaluate...

Representativeness means that the resemblance of an issue or object to a typical example or stereotype is influential when making a judgment. People associate an unknown object with a typical example from a suitable category of objects (Tversky/Kahneman 1974, cf. as well Kinder 2006: 205). In doing so, they do not consider the distribution and frequency of the categories in reality. If an object resembles a stereotype, human beings conclude that the object ought to be put in the same category; no matter how likely or unlikely it is that such an object exists in their environment. For example, if someone is asked to decide whether a politician is a left- or right-wing politician, and the only information that the person has about the politician is that he has long hair and wears a wool sweater and sneakers. Then the person will very likely conclude that the politician is a leftist politician because he resembles the stereotypical leftist politician more than a prototype right-wing politician. Prefabricated categories and stereotypes serve as a shortcut when evaluating a similar object.

When using an anchoring and adjustment heuristic, an estimate value or size of the quantity serves as a starting point for further judgments. People are influenced by the known anchor value; they adjust it to the new, unknown situation and eventually come to their final estimation. Bias can occur if the anchor is untrustworthy or if the adjustment is insufficient. Even if the anchor is a correct estimation, the final judgment is biased in the direction of this anchor value, which leads to an under- or overestimation of the unknown issue. This heuristic can be related to the availability heuristic because the initial anchor value can be something that easily springs to mind. Here is an example: A person from Poznan, Poland is asked to guess the unemployment rate in his region. He gets the information that the unemployment rate in Poland is approximately 8 percent. This person uses this 8 percent as an anchor; he reasons that his city is better off than many other cities or regions in Poland and comes to the decision that the unemployment rate in his region is lower than 8 percent. In such a case, the anchor value combined with basic knowledge of the topic helps one to come to a decision (Tversky/Kahneman 1974, Lau/Redlawsk 2006: 25-26).

Within each of these three broad categories, one can find many different concrete shortcuts. Conducting a meta-analysis McGraw “searched abstracts in the political science and psychological literatures, and discovered more than 50 distinct heuristics (or, at least, heuristics given distinct names by researchers)” (2000: 820). Because of these manifold possible shortcuts used in different political contexts, a theory-driven approach in identifying important shortcuts in the European context is necessary to prevent an arbitrary selection of shortcuts. Research on EU support produces such a theoretical background by highlighting the use of national attitudes as shortcuts due to the interdependencies between the
national and European level in the European multi-level system and because of the remoteness of the EU. Chapter 2.2.3.4 will describe how findings from this research on EU support as well as the theoretical assumptions made in cognitive psychological literature can be combined to come up with a theoretically meaningful model of EU support for the CEE context.

Before I am able to combine both research traditions, a closer look at opinion formation with a special emphasis on the last step of this process – the retrieval of information from memory – is needed. This simplifies determining which specific shortcuts from the national context are relevant in explaining EU support and how these can be integrated in my EU support model.

Cognitive psychological research on the formation of opinions distinguishes between two possible underlying processes: the on-line versus the memory-based process. On-line opinion formation means that a person has an ‘on-line running tally’ where evaluations about objects are saved. When a person gets new information about a certain topic, he integrates the evaluation connected to this new information into his on-line running tally, which is updated continuously when new information is at hand. This model highlights that only the evaluation of an object is saved, but not the information which led to the evaluation. That means the person has a continuously updated evaluation of an object in his mind, but he usually does not remember how this evaluation came about. If an evaluation of a certain object is necessary, e.g. when asked in a survey, the tally with its summarized evaluations is requested and the overall evaluation is reported without thinking of the information that accounted for this judgment. The judgment is therefore a reflection of all evaluative information exposed to the person (McGraw 2000: 812, cf. as well Lodge/Stroh 1993, Steenbergen/Lodge 2003).

In contrast, the memory-based process states that if a person receives new information about an object, some pieces of this new information will be stored in long-term memory. This person can save information about the given topic, its affects, and relations between different topics in his memory. When this person is asked to evaluate the object, he searches in his long-term memory for adequate information about this object. He comes to an overall evaluation by integrating all the information that he has found in his long-term memory. Therefore, the reported judgment is based on the information retrieved from the information found at this point in time. The recalled information can differ from time to time, which makes the judgments about an object instable and variable (McGraw 2000: 813, cf. as well Iyengar/Kinder 1987, Zaller 1992: 49, Zaller/Feldman 1992, Steenbergen/Lodge 2003).

There has been a long debate over the adequacy of the two models explaining opinion formation. Nowadays, it is agreed that both models are valid but apply under different conditions and circumstances. On-line processing is useful to form an attitude towards an object that one has to vote on, e.g. attitudes towards...
presidential candidates in the USA or attitudes towards a topic of a referendum. In this case, it is clear that the person has to make a decision on a specific date and on-line processing prepares him for coming to a quick decision. In contrast, memory-based opinions are formed more off the top of one’s head. It can be applied if a person has to come to a judgment about an abstract or remote issue that is irrelevant to the person, e.g. if a pollster shows up unannounced or makes a call to ask about complex political issues or actors (Zaller 1992: 50, McGraw 2000: 813-814). To sum it up in the words of McGraw, “opinions about issues that are of great subjective importance to an individual are formed on-line, whereas issues that are unimportant are more likely to produce memory-based opinions” (2000: 813).

There are two arguments in favor of the memory-based process of opinion formation as the likely process underlying opinion formation about the EU. Firstly, the EU or European integration is unimportant to most citizens and there is rarely an election on this issue. Secondly, research on EU support has proven the importance of shortcuts when a person evaluates the EU; this indicates that a memory-based process takes place because the concept of heuristics is easier to combine with the memory-based process than with the on-line process. In a memory-based opinion formation, a person retrieves all accessible information he regards as important to form an opinion about an object – no matter if the information is correct or if the information is objectively related to the object. By contrast, opinion formation in an on-line process assumes that the only relevant evaluations are directly connected to the object for which an opinion is needed.

Zaller, who advocates the memory-based principle in political contexts, provides us with a general concept of opinion formation regarding different political judgments, such as voting decisions, expressing opinions about day-to-day politics, or answering questions in an opinion survey (1992). He states that every person stores political information that is saved as a reservoir of so-called political considerations. That means citizens do not have true attitudes or non-attitudes, instead, their long-term memories are made up of considerations, which are “defined as any reason that might induce an individual to decide a political issue one way or the other. Considerations, thus, are compound of cognition and affect – that is, a belief concerning an object and an evaluation of the belief” (Zaller 1992: 40). When citizens have to decide on something, e.g. when they are asked to evaluate a political object, they do not think of all saved considerations corresponding to that object. Instead, they only use the considerations that are “top-of-the-head” (Taylor/Fiske 1978: 252). Which considerations are top-of-the-head depends first and foremost on current elite discussions and the news dominating the environment. Zaller’s concept and heuristic research can be combined because Zaller’s idea is connected to the availability heuristic. Top-of-
the-head considerations are easily available and accessible information in the sense of the availability heuristic.

Henceforth, in my study I will concentrate on the memory-based process of opinion formation: I will describe how the understanding of central concepts from cognitive psychology, namely, heuristics, schemata, and the memory-based process, can improve models on EU support.

2.2.3.4 Combining evidence from research on support for the European Union and cognitive psychological research

Research on EU support found that national attitudes can serve as judgmental shortcuts when evaluating EU support, European integration or specific European issues. The cognitive psychological reason why national attitudes are used as shortcuts is because they are top-of-the-head; they are easily available and accessible from memory. Therefore, they fall into the first category of heuristics presented above. Attitudes towards the nation-state are easier to remember and easier to access than any other attitudes towards politics because the nation-state is familiar to ordinary citizens. One can read and hear a lot about national politics, and information about it is frequent and vivid. Thus, information about national objects, easily recalled from long-term memory, can influence opinion formation on other, more distant political objects like foreign countries or the EU. I argue that people can form opinions about the EU, but these opinions are influenced by attitudes towards the national system because the nation-state is the most prominent and salient political object to ordinary citizens. Because of this centrality of the nation-state, easily accessible attitudes towards this system must be included into a model of support for the EU. To adequately capture the opinion formation process, they must be modeled in a way that national attitudes influence European attitudes. National attitudes are the shortcuts that are formed temporally prior to European attitudes (Van Kersbergen 2000, Kritzinger 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). With reference to the memory-based process of opinion formation explained above, it is assumed that a person who needs to form an opinion about a certain European aspect uses information about national aspects stored in long-term memory to come to an opinion about European aspects. Information about the better known national political system helps to form an opinion about the less known European system.

A question that follows is: What specific national attitudes serve as shortcuts? There is a bulk of national attitudes accessible from long-term memory but it is likely that not every national attitude is helpful in the formation of an opinion.
Two things about heuristics must be considered: First, the thoughts on heuristics make clear that there is a cognitive component within the concept of heuristics. Heuristics – in my case: national attitudes – help to form opinions if there is a lack of knowledge or awareness of the political object that is to be evaluated – in my case, the EU. This means, heuristics can only be helpful if they can compensate missing knowledge. It then follows that only attitudes, which have a cognitive-evaluative dimension and rest upon knowledge and reasoning, can be formed on the basis of reasonable and appropriate heuristics. The object, which is to be evaluated, must have a cognitive component so that evaluations of it can be formed on the basis of knowledge. If one does not possess sufficient knowledge of this object to come up with an evaluation of the object an appropriate heuristic can compensate for the lack of knowledge and an evaluation of the unknown object is possible. For example, if someone evaluates the Council of the EU, but he possesses little knowledge of this institution, he can use his knowledge and evaluation of national political institutions to compensate for the lack of EU-knowledge. He simply transfers his opinion about national political institutions to this unknown European institution. He can then come up with an evaluation of the Council but this evaluation is based on national considerations.

Second, it can be argued that heuristics should have something to do with the unknown or distant object that one wants to evaluate. The shortcut can be a reasonable and helpful shortcut only if there is a connection between the shortcut and the object that is being evaluated. Otherwise heuristics would not be a useful tool, but just arbitrary thoughts. Further support for this view comes from the description of the representativeness heuristics. If one generalizes this heuristics category, it follows that the perceived resemblance of an object that is to be evaluated against an already known object leads one to infer from the known to the unknown object. The following cognitive mechanism underlies the opinion formation process: Human beings try to sort and categorize things that they have just learned. If a person encounters an alien or new object, he will try to group this object into a category made up of known objects that resemble the new ob-

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34 Memory-based processing and Zaller’s model cannot explain what national attitudes serve as adequate shortcuts. These models can explain why national attitudes are relevant, but they say nothing about how these attitudes can be integrated into a model of EU support because they make no statements about how attitudes are organized or structured in long-term memory. Zaller developed a simple model of information processing, which is too simple for my purpose because it does not include any reference to the structure or organization of information. He conceptualized the considerations in a way that they are unconnected to each other and are not integrated into more complex constructs like belief systems or schemata, where ties within long-term memory exist (Zaller 1992: 37-39, 115-116, 280, for a very good review see Schmitt-Beck 2000: 44-62).
ject. Then if a judgment must be given about the new object, attitudes towards the old known object from the same category are used for the evaluation of the new object (Lau 2003, Lau/Redlawsk 2006). The cognitive principle behind the representativeness heuristic is further elaborated on within the schema concept. As stated above, schemata are cognitive structures in which information about objects that are connected to each other are represented, structured, and sorted in categories and subcategories. This concept provides hints as to what specific national attitudes are useful heuristics in my context. Useful heuristics – in the sense of the representativeness heuristics – are attitudes towards objects that fall into the same category as the object to be evaluated. One can imagine a parliaments category in which information about different parliaments is stored. Possible subcategories of this main category can include the national parliament, regional parliaments, other countries’ parliaments, or the European Parliament. This means that knowledge of and attitudes towards different parliaments are stored together in one schema in long-term memory, and if one piece of information from this schema is activated, other related pieces can be activated as well. The more strongly linked two pieces of information are, the more likely it is that one of these pieces will spring into mind if the other is top-of-the-head.

Transferring these considerations to the attitude structure underlying support for the EU leads to the following conclusion: With reference to the study of Fuchs (2003), objects that are generally relevant in explaining support for a political regime are reasonable shortcuts when evaluating the European political system. The idea is that attitudes, like the performance of the system or the actors of that system, which citizens generally associate with a political system, spring into mind if they are asked to evaluate another political system. With respect to Fuchs’ model of regime support, this means that citizens use perceptions of the systemic and democratic performance of the nation-state as shortcuts to generate EU attitudes because they do not possess enough knowledge to form self-contained attitudes of the systemic and democratic performance of the EU – the two EU-specific cognitive-evaluative attitudes in Fuchs’ model. In contrast, the other determinant of EU support in Fuchs’ model – European identity – cannot be formed on the basis of a shortcut because this affective and emotional attitude is not based primarily on knowledge for which a heuristic can compensate.

The restriction to these shortcuts is supported by another reason: National attitudes are comparatively simple heuristics; they do not require much knowledge and experience to be applied. There are other shortcuts, like ideology or party cues, which are more demanding (Lau/Redlawsk 2001: 953-954, Kuklinski/Quirk 2001: 294-296; a point further discussed in chapter 3.3.1). To use the shortcuts deduced from Fuchs’ support model, only superficial knowledge of the nation-state is necessary and almost no knowledge of the EU is required, which make these shortcuts appropriate for ordinary citizens in their evaluation of EU-
More concretely, representativeness heuristics and schema theory provide an answer as to how these national attitudes can be related to EU attitudes to be used as shortcuts and how they can be integrated into a model of EU support. When evaluating an object from the European level a person falls back on equivalent or similar national attitudinal objects. Such similar attitudinal objects are connected in long-term memory; they are stored together in one schema. So, again with reference to Fuchs’ model, the assessment of the systemic performance of the nation-state is a possible heuristic for the evaluation of the systemic performance of the EU, and the national democratic performance can serve as a shortcut for the evaluation of the democratic performance of the EU. In this case, the heuristics and the unknown EU objects are of a similar level of abstraction. All perceptions of performance are quite specific attitudes, compared with the rather general attitude of EU support. It is more likely that specific attitudes are stored and activated together, while general attitudes are stored in a separate schema. So in long-term memory, a specific national attitude, like systemic or democratic performance, is connected to specific attitudes concerning the EU, but they are not connected to the general attitude of support for the EU. The specific national attitudes do not serve as a heuristic for EU support because these specific national attitudes would not be activated if someone thought about the EU in general. Hence, shortcuts from the national context only indirectly influence EU support – namely via the specific EU attitudes, systemic and democratic performance of the EU. According to the representativeness heuristics, it makes more sense that shortcuts influence the evaluation of similar objects but not of unknown objects in general. The attitude structure behind EU support can be seen as a chain: starting points are national attitudes from the same category as specific European attitudes; these national attitudes serve as shortcuts for the evaluation of specific European attitudes, which in turn determine an overall evaluation of the European system reflected in EU support.

This chain of influence is the result of a combination of EU research with findings from cognitive psychology as presented here. It stands in contrast to some traditional studies on EU support, which model a direct influence of national shortcuts. I argue that results from traditional studies should be considered with care because the direct influence of shortcuts is difficult to justify from a cognitive psychological point of view, and it seems that these studies use models that are too simple to represent the assumed empirical attitude structure.

The aforementioned aspects concentrate on the role and position of national attitudes serving as shortcuts for cognitive-evaluative attitudes towards the EU.
However, Fuchs’ model of support for a political regime includes the identification with the European community as another determinant of support. Since this determinant has a more affective dimension, the lack of knowledge of the EU does not influence the formation of European identity in the same manner as described above for cognitive-evaluative attitudes. It has not been included into the discussion about heuristics because European identity cannot be formed on a basis of heuristics. Hence, national identity as the equivalent and similar attitude on the national level does not function as a heuristic for European identity like the national attitudes mentioned above. However, there can be a relation between national and European identity since both are identities towards imagined political communities that are organized in multi-level political systems. The connection between national and European identity cannot be captured with the instruments of cognitive psychological research and the concept of heuristics, but with findings from social psychology as identity is a social psychological concept (cf. Chapter 2.2.2.2). These emotional attitudes towards political communities are helpful in explaining EU support. That is why the relation between national and European identity and their relation to EU support will be explored with references to social psychological findings in chapter 2.2.3.6.

Before I deal with these remaining attitudes, I will outline the importance of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in the Central and Eastern European context. The above mentioned considerations about opinion formation and the role of national attitudes as shortcuts in the European context can be generally applied to all EU member states because the EU is a distant and complex system to most citizens and there is a strong connection between the nation-state and the EU in every member state. Nevertheless, the necessity for considering these specific shortcuts increases because of the sample of countries analyzed in my study. The next chapter will provide reasons for why it is especially important to systematically integrate national attitudes into Fuchs’ EU support model when analyzing Central and Eastern European countries.

2.2.3.5 National attitudes as cognitive heuristics in Central and Eastern Europe

In this chapter, I will explain why the EU is more distant and remote for Central and Eastern European citizens, which leads to the conclusion that shortcuts play a more significant role in the CEE context than in the Western European context. My aim is not to compare the Western and the Eastern contexts; rather, I want to explicate that the general findings on shortcuts apply to the CEE context in particular. I will show that the interdependence between CEE countries and the EU did not only start with the accession, but that there has been a strong relationship between the two almost from the beginning of the transformation process in
CEE. In this environment, national attitudes served as shortcuts even before these countries became full members of the EU as there was a common effort of both political levels to improve living conditions in CEE.

The first argument for why national attitudes might play such a crucial role as shortcuts in CEE is that the EU is further away from the everyday lives of CEE citizens. As previous chapters have pointed out, the remote and distant nature of the EU is responsible for the need for shortcuts when evaluating the EU in the first place; thus, such shortcuts should be even more relevant in the CEE context because citizens from new member states lack socialization in the EU and have only little experience with the EU. Moreover, CEE countries are ‘special’ new member states because they have experienced a completely different history than Western Europe in the last 60 years.

In Western Europe, the EU is a given thing. Some countries – the original six, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands – have experienced more than 50 years of European integration. Economic, political, and cultural aspects of the EC, and later the EU, have for years been a part of the economic, political, and cultural life in these countries – even if it is debatable as to what extent ordinary people have been affected by integration. Nevertheless, European integration gradually deepened, giving citizens the chance to become familiar with the European project over time. Other Western countries that joined in later enlargement waves were integrated during the Cold War period, which made it easier for citizens to understand the ideas and values behind European integration. In contrast, populations on the other side of the Iron Curtain were cut off from the West, from Western politics and culture in general, and from the process of European integration in particular. Without socialization in the EC or EU and without contact with European integration, citizens’ attitudes that directly address European aspects have only been formed based on the experience with the EU after the end of communism.

The time span since the end of communism is quite short. The first EU programs to help these countries during their transformation process – such as PHARE35 – started as early as 1989; official applications from CEE countries to the Council were submitted from 1994 onwards; and concrete negotiations on EU membership began in 1998.36 The EU provided the applicant countries with

35 PHARE = Poland and Hungary Aid for Economic Restructuring – a program that was later broaden to the entire region to fulfill economic and political goals.
36 In 1997, the European Council in Luxembourg decided to start the accession process in 1998 with five post-communist countries that were the best prepared for EU membership at that time: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. In 2000, negotiations were started with Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia (and additionally, Bulgaria and Romania).
the Copenhagen Criteria (cf. Footnote 2) and the acquis communautaire, which outlined the requirements that the EU had set out for future member states (Berend 2009). During this time, there were rather loose connections between the EU and the future member states so the EU was basically seen as an organization helping to introduce peace, political stability, and economic development to CEE. This view was dominant among the elites and the population at large (Zielonka 2007a: 23-43). However, a small part of the population interpreted EU commitment as a threat to the newly introduced independence of their nation-states, and therefore, refused any outside intervention (Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006: 114-117, Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006b: 1-2). Overall, the opinions addressed more superficial positions and did not deal with specific European aspects since there was no need for further engagement with the concrete implementation of European integration with EU membership years away. The relationship got closer after the EU agreed on the eastward enlargement and invited eight post-communist countries to join the EU. In 2003, referendums on EU membership gave citizens from CEE a say on a European issue for the first time, and they started to have ‘actual’ experiences with Europe. The time span that interests me starts exactly at this point in time and covers the first years of membership until 2007. This means that citizens have been exposed to no more than three years of experience within the EU. Little experience with an object, especially if the object is complex, leads to low interest and awareness, which, in turn, encourages the use of shortcuts.

Moreover, the contemporary history of the CEE countries is shaped by the political and economic transformation, which every former communist country in the last 20 years has had to face. Some of the CEE countries have had to experience a third transformation: from a member of a federation towards a new sovereign nation-state. Such tremendous changes in social, political, and economic life cannot be observed in any other former EU candidate country. The influence of enormous domestic struggles on attitudes towards the EU has generally been neglected in Western-based models of EU support. The only exception is the so-called southern enlargement in the 1980s, when Greece, Spain, and Portugal joined the EU. These countries were newly democratized and rather poor countries, and EU membership was seen by the EU and the new member states as stabilizing and guaranteeing democracy, wealth, and peace in these countries and throughout Western Europe. Therefore, from the literature on the southern enlargement (see e.g. Tsoukalis 1981, Duchêne 1982, Wallace 1990) some findings can be transferred to the CEE context. Nevertheless, in a study focusing on CEE, the particularities arising from the experience of having been on the communist side of the Iron Curtain during the Cold War and from the experience of the post-communist period must be discussed with regards to their influence on a model of EU support (Ehin 2001, Tucker et al. 2002). The renunciation of state social-
ism and the formation of sovereign states were the crucial political events that led to domestic politics permanently overarching foreign politics and internal struggles suppressing the European issue to a certain extent. Hence, it was difficult for Europe to get through to Central and Eastern Europeans. While the lack of socialization and the little experience with the EU highlights the need for shortcuts, the dominance of domestic politics is an indication to use national attitudes as shortcuts.

The importance of national politics with respect to EU issues is further demonstrated by the relation between national and EU politics – even before the accession. This relation can be seen as consisting of three aspects. Firstly, domestic and European politics were intertwined. Concurrent with the transformation process, the sovereign nation-states wanted to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria in order to become EU member states. Hence, in post-communist Europe, domestic and European or international politics were closely linked because the nation-states tried to satisfy the European authorities with their political decisions. On the other hand, the EU made demands on the countries willing to accede, and therefore put pressure on political actors to proceed with political and economic transition (Tucker et al. 2002, Beichelt 2004a: 40-51). Secondly, especially during the first years of transition, both political levels tried to fulfill similar tasks, and to provide similar goods with respect to political and economic transformation. Both levels wanted to reach similar goals, like keeping peace and security, and establishing democratic structures and a functioning market economy. Because of the interplay between national and European actors, it was difficult for ordinary citizens to decide if a certain decision or policy was introduced because of the will of national actors or the pressure from the EU. This left the citizens with the impression that the new domestic political actors and the EU brought forward necessary political and economic reforms (Cichowski 2000: 1249-1251, Tucker et al. 2002, Fölsz/Tóka 2006). As stated above, domestic politics overarched European or international politics because the political and economic transformation processes were relatively new and dramatic experiences, and therefore, recent domestic developments shaped opinions about the EU and EU membership, not the other way round. Thirdly, during times of political uncertainty, national elites function as opinion leaders to a greater extent than during ‘normal’ times, especially concerning distant and complex issues. Because a large proportion of the national elites were in favor of the EU during that period (Beichelt 2004b, Bielasiak 2006, Fölsz/Tóka 2006, Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006), citizens’ satisfaction and trust in national political actors resulted in support for European integration as citizens adopted the elites’ opinion (Ehin 2001). Even if “CEE publics do not unanimously share the Euro-enthusiasm of national elites” (Ehin 2001: 32), citizens who generally trusted their politicians supported negotiations of the political elites with the EU. Even before CEE countries had be-
come an official part of the European multi-level structure, political elites started
to work within the European framework, e.g. they prepared the EU accession of
their countries or they participated in the Convention on the Future of Europe
that drafted the ‘The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe’.

Overall, various interdependencies between the national and European level
have occurred since the 1990s. These interdependencies can be found in long-
running political goals and values, as well as the activities of the political actors.
In 2004, the relationship between the two political levels was further deepened,
when, with full EU membership, the relation between the CEE countries and the
EU changed into a multi-level system of governance.

To sum it up, some developments in CEE coincide, which heighten the im-
portance of shortcuts and the probability of national attitudes serving as
shortcuts. Historical experiences after World War II, especially after the end of
communism, have left the Central and Eastern Europeans in a greater state of
uncertainty regarding their political and economic future than any population of
any other candidate countries. This uncertainty plays a role when CEE citizens
are asked to evaluate a complex issue like European integration (Tucker et al.
2002: 569-570). As the chapter on cognitive psychological assumptions on opin-
ion formation has shown, opinion formation under such circumstances, namely
under uncertainty, as well as with limited experience and low awareness, re-
quires the use of judgmental shortcuts to make evaluations. Therefore, stable atti-
ditudes towards the EU, independent from other political objects, cannot be ex-
pected from ordinary CEE citizens. Even if it is possible that the recent accession
to the EU raised interest and citizens became more aware of the EU, it is likely
that this curiosity has already waned. The EU has quickly lost its initial attrac-
tiveness while, at the same time, it is not yet as deeply rooted in CEE society as
it is in established member states. European integration has been a topic for Cen-
tral and Eastern Europeans and membership has quickly been seen as an option
for the future; however, as transition to democracy and market reforms only hap-
pened shortly before EU accession, it can be argued that the EU is of different
significance in CEE than in established member states. For citizens in CEE, the
EU is an even more distant and remote object with a low priority in the citizens’
day-to-day lives. For CEE citizens, the picture of the EU is influenced by recent
developments in their countries. Domestic issues, as well as attitudes and behav-
ior of the national political elites come clearly to the fore and serve as shortcuts
to evaluate European integration and the EU.

These facts must be considered when specifying an attitude model of EU sup-
port suitable for CEE. The intensive interdependencies between the national and
the European level and the distance and remoteness of the EU for CEE citizens
must be reflected in the model. Before I can introduce my model of EU support
in CEE, consideration about the role and position of national identity, its rela-
2.2.3.6 Multiple identities: Evidence from social psychology and EU research

Although I focus on the role of cognitive heuristics in the attitude structure underlying EU support, there is another research tradition that takes into account the remote and complex character of the EU, and the low levels of awareness and knowledge among citizens concerning EU matters. In the literature on regime support in general and EU support in particular, it is argued that national identity – an affective, emotional and therefore less demanding attitude – can help citizens form opinions about the EU in a low information environment.

In this chapter I will discuss national identity from two different points of view. Firstly, national identity is discussed as a social psychological concept, especially with regards to the concept of multiple identities and national identity’s relation to other group identities like European identity. And secondly, the relevance and stance of national identity within EU research is analyzed. In the case of identity, it makes more sense to start with social psychological considerations on multiple identities rather than the role of national identity in the field of EU research. With the knowledge of multiple identities, it is easier to understand the role of national identity in EU support models.

Important aspects about the concept of identity in general have been described in chapter 2.2.2.2 when European identity was introduced. In that chapter, I have already described that a political identity generally encompasses the psychological relation of an individual to a large group, which deserves sovereignty and to which the individual feels a sense of belonging. Hence, the affective dimension of the concept has been emphasized. Furthermore, it has been highlighted that political identities are large-group-identities, so it is impossible to know all members of the given group. As the plural use of identities implies, the presented identification with the European community is, of course, not the only identification with a group an individual can possess. This aspect must be discussed in detail because national identity – the identification with the national community – and its relation to European identity and to EU support are relevant for my theoretical considerations about an attitude model of EU support.

Modern individuals usually belong to different groups because they are aware of different attributes or values by which they can categorize themselves. For example, an individual can simultaneously be male, protestant, environmentalist, blue-collar worker, Slavic, or European; however, depending on the circumstances, some concepts are more salient than others at a given time. Thus, individuals belong to multiple groups; in other words, they have multiple identities.
(Hogg/Abrams 1990: 14, Risse 2004: 248). Sometimes different identities are not strictly separated and may be inconsistent, but, in general, they are not in conflict with each other (Risse 2001, Kohli 2002, Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 8). Herrmann and Brewer describe three different ways in which multiple identities can be related to each other. Firstly, identities can be nested. This means that, an individual belonging to a smaller community is a member of a larger community as well. For example, a person living in Tallinn is both a Tallinner and an Estonian. Secondly, multiple identities can be cross-cutting. This means that an individual is a part of at least two groups and the members of both groups are not identical. Some group members who share a common identity with the individual regarding one dimension can be in an opposing group on another dimension. For example, a protestant blue-collar worker is a member of a group characterized by a common profession (blue-collar worker), which also includes Catholics, who are in an opposing group if religion is the defining group characteristic. Or the other way around: among a religiously formed group of Protestants, many professions can be found. Thirdly, identities can be separate. The multiple groups to which an individual belongs have nothing to do with each other. Generally, such groups are quite small, so they cannot overlap. For example, the members of a tennis club to which an individual belongs are distinct from fellow singers in the individual’s choir (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 8-10).

Using this systematization to come up with conclusions about political identities – specifically European and national identities – the first two relations presented above can capture the situation quite well. The third relation, however, is unlikely to apply because political groups are presumably too large to be totally separated from other groups (Risse 2004: 250). Which relation applies depends on what political identities are compared. For instance, European identity can be related to various identities, but its relationship with other identities that refer to territorial categories – local, regional, or national – is presumed to be the most important one. And among these, the national-European relation is the most interesting when analyzing the attitude structure underlying EU support (Gerhards 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). According to Herrmann and Brewer, “the institutions of the EU may be subjectively represented for some individuals as a superordinate group within which national identities are nested, but for others their European identity may subjectively cross-cut their national identity” (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 10).

To better understand the relation between European and national identities and their influence on EU support, research on support for the EU must be consulted. Considerations in EU research focusing on the role of identities in attitude models give insights for the transfer of the social psychological discussion about multiple identities to the European context, and for the inclusion of national identity into a model of EU support.
In the first decade of the twenty-first century, national identity, as another national attitude besides national political performances, became prominent in helping to explain EU support. Identification with the national community—an attitude not directly related to the political system and its actors—is seen as a determinant of EU support. The relevance of this affective attitude has been proven by a number of theory-driven empirical studies. Even if they were not the first to make the point on identity (e.g. back in the 1970s, Inglehart wrote about the relation between national and cosmopolitan identification and opposition to or support for European integration (1977)), Hooghe and Marks most prominently argue for the relevance of national identification for EU support. In their 2005 study, “Calculation, Community and Cues: Public Opinion on European Integration”, they developed a model of EU support combining ‘traditional’ national attitudes and national identity as possible determinants. Their model is based on Anderson’s considerations mentioned above and on findings from Franklin et al. (1994). Franklin et al. studied referendum votes held on the Treaty of Maastricht. They came to the conclusion that these votes “[were] better interpreted as decisions made on short-term, national, rather than on long-term, European considerations” (Franklin et al. 1994: 470). Hooghe and Marks’ theoretical framework represents the shortcuts concept mentioned above—or in their termination, ‘cue theory’—which “regards the European Union as an extension of domestic politics, and infers that public attitudes are therefore guided by domestic ideology and domestic political organizations” (Hooghe/Marks 2005: 420). Using a Eurobarometer data set from fall 2000, they provide empirical evidence in support of the shortcut concept by demonstrating that attitudes towards the EU are “constrained by political ideology, political parties, and political elites in those domestic arenas” (Hooghe/Marks 2005: 425). Furthermore, they took traditional research one step further and included considerations on social identity theory as another theoretical framework. This theory “conceives of the European Union as a polity overarching established territorial communities, and considers how public opinion is constrained by citizens’ conceptions of their identities” (Hooghe/Marks 2005: 420). Hence, they referred to an additional national attitude, namely national identity, and tested if support for the EU was influenced by citizens’ identification with national communities. They found that national identity can increase EU support if a person has co-existing identities with several communities (e.g. regional, national, European communities), but it can decrease support for the EU if he exclusively identifies with his nation. However, the influence of exclusive national identity in decreasing EU support depends on the national political elites. If these elites are divided on European integration, exclusive national identity reduces EU support. But if the elites are united in their support of the EU, identity towards the national community does not diminish EU support (Hooghe/Marks 2005).
As their study points out, the relationship between national identity, European identity, and general attitudes towards the EU is complex. This complexity results from the existence of multiple identities as described in social identity theory. Regarding Europe, for example, individuals can identify either with the national community or the European community, or they can identify with both or none of these communities. The existence of multiple identities has been empirically proven in various studies, which show that the concept of multiple identities in the European context is more than a theoretical construct (Duchesne/Frognier 1995, 2008, Marks 1999, Díez Medrano 2003, Westle 2003a, Castano 2004, Citrin/Sides 2004, for a more theoretical focus see Cinnirella 1996, Kohli 2002, Breakwell 2004). Multiple identities towards different political communities are part of the self-categorization concept of individuals. Having accepted these findings, the discussion in contemporary research concentrates on the relationship between these multiple identities, especially the relationship between regional, national, and European identities.37

As stated above, Herrmann and Brewer (2004) presented general models of how multiple identities may be configured. Although European and national identities theoretically can be either nested or cross-cutting identities, there are more convincing arguments for the nested model. Furthermore, empirical results are consistent with the nested model (Risse 2004: 250, cf. Bruter 2004, Citrin/Sides 2004). Hence, the multi-level structure of the EU does not only influence the decision-making processes and the institutional level of national systems, but it also influences citizens’ identities. As Marks points out, “[j]ust as national states on Western Europe form only one part of a multilevel polity that stretches beneath and above them, so national identities form one element in a more complex multilevel pattern encompassing local and regional as well as supranational identities” (Marks 1999: 77). The EU itself seeks to foster new overarching identities through symbolic politics like the European flag or the European anthem – all in an effort to unite the European community; yet, simultaneously, it tries to protect older existing national identities by following the principle of ‘unity in diversity’ (Herrmann/Brewer 2004: 11).

What does the relationship between national and European identity look like? Every member of the smaller group (Nationals) can be a member of the larger group (Europeans) as well. In this perspective, national identity is a subunit of European identity. As the identities are arranged in a hierarchical order, they are not in competition but complementary. This means that “the identification with

37 I neglect the relationship between regional identity and European identity because this study generally deals with the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and on EU support. Further information on this point can be found in Marks (1999) or Westle (2003a).

Furthermore, this view on national and European identity implies that national identity has a primacy over its European counterpart in the attitude structure of citizens. Indeed, national identity is likely to be more salient and more deeply rooted in an individual’s self-concept. This is proven empirically in many studies, which show that more individuals identify with their national community than with the European community in all countries throughout Europe (Duchesne/Frognier 1995, Marks 1999, Westle 2003b). Once national identities are formed, they are relatively stable attitudes. It is likely that national identity continues to exist, even as more individuals integrate European identity into their self-concepts as European integration proceeds (Citrin/Sides 2004: 170). Caporoso and Kim put it in a nutshell: “European and national identity go hand in hand – most Europeans think ‘country first, but Europe, too’” (Caporaso/Kim 2009: 24).

Therefore, it is more likely that national identity influences European identity rather than the other way around. Inglehart’s considerations include the assumption that people expressing a commitment to one political community – say, to the national community – are able to identify with other communities, too (Inglehart 1977: 330-331, Castano 2004: 51-52). More concretely, “’European identity’ does not emerge ex nihilo but, rather, is built on the basis of existing identi-

38 This is in accordance with a model of attachments proposed by Westle. She differentiates between two types of attachments by explaining the structure of regional, national, and European identity. Firstly, the model of opposing attachments states that every individual identifies primarily with one geopolitical unit and this primary identity is contrary to other attachments. For example, if individuals develop identification with the European community, identities towards other communities decrease. Secondly, the model of concordant attachments stresses the possibility of multiple identities. Individuals can identify with communities on different geopolitical units, which are hierarchically organized, and these identities are compatible with each other. She finds empirical evidence for the second model using data encompassing the EU-15 (Westle 2003a, b). Other models, like Rissee’s’ ‘marble cake’ model point in a similar direction. According to his model, multiple identities can exist but the crucial point is that they influence each other regarding the contents of these identities; e.g. national identity in countries of the EU is, among other things, influenced by European history and European culture. To highlight that national and European identities are enmeshed and cannot be separated, he uses the picture of a marble cake to describe the relationship (Risse 2003, 2004).

39 However, this finding of a positive relationship is ambiguous. There are empirical studies revealing a negative relationship (e.g. Duchesne/Frognier 2008).
ties – particularly, of course, national identities. [...] National identity is the springboard, not the grave-digger, of European identity, with national identity providing a model of what it is to belong to a remote political community” (Duchesne/Frognier 1995: 194). Consequently, identification with a national community is an example of every we-feeling with any imagined community. Therefore, this affective, emotional attitude can help to form the same kind of attitude on the European level, and it can be applied even under the condition of limited knowledge and minimal information.

Furthermore, it is highlighted that the identification with the national community as a less sophisticated, less rational, and less demanding attitude, compared with utilitarian attitudes (Brubaker/Cooper 2000: 6), \(^{40}\) can help people to evaluate other European issues apart from European identity (Christin/Trechsel 2002). For citizens who identify strongly with their national community, the nation-state is very important. They may fear that European integration will threaten the nation-state, its values, religion, language and so forth. Hence, they oppose the EU as a political system overarching the nation-state and they oppose several EU policies for undermining national sovereignty. For these citizens, EU membership or support for European integration must be denied in order to protect the nation-state (Hix 1999: 73, Taggart 1998, Christin/Trechsel 2002, McLaren 2002, 2006: 72-74). In contrast, the nation-state’s interest and values can be protected by and within the EU because it is a system made up of peoples and nations that show only weak tendencies towards minimizing existing differences between them. Therefore, European integration does not necessarily contradict national interests, and citizens recognizing this may be able to combine strong feelings of national identity with EU support. In 1966, Hoffmann stated that a strong national consciousness was not an obstacle for European integration. He claimed that generally national consciousness was neutral in integrated nation-states and did not lead to hostility towards foreign nations. Furthermore, “it is perfectly conceivable that a nation convinces itself that its ‘cohesion and distinctiveness’ will be best preserved in a larger entity” (Hoffmann 1966: 867-868).

Some empirical studies show a negative relationship between national identity and various EU aspects. To illustrate, Carey (2002) found a significant negative

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\(^{40}\) Research sometimes treats national identity as a kind of utilitarian attitude by arguing that a distinctive national identity mainly emphasizes the citizens’ interest in the well-being of the nation-state and the national community (Gabel 1998c, Van Kersbergen 2000). But most of the literature recognizes that not everything about the EU is about economic factors, and that ordinary citizens view the EU from different perspectives. One of these perspectives is led by an affective feeling or attachment to the national and the European community (McLaren 2004).
effect on European integration on the individual level; however, the causal relationship that he described, was small for those citizens, who identified with Europe. Luedtke (2005) detected a negative relation between national identity and support for a specific EU policy, namely immigration policy. For Switzerland, Christin and Trechsel (2002) found lower support for EU membership among citizens with strong attachments to the Swiss nation. In contrast, in their empirical study Marks and Hooghe state that “[t]he greater citizens’ pride and attachment to their nation, the greater is their support for European integration” (Marks/Hooghe 2003: 19). Overall, one can say “that national attachment is not mutually exclusive with either European attachment or support for European integration” (Marks/Hooghe 2003: 19). National identity is of a “double-edged character” (Hooghe/Marks 2005: 431); it can contribute to or weaken EU support. Most importantly, its influence depends on its relation to European identity and the existence or non-existence of multiple identities.

Moreover, the relationship between the two identities and between national identity and other European attitudes depends on the historical and cultural background of the countries studied and on the framing of the identities by national actors. “Depending on the way elites and the mass media interpret and advertise the European system in progress, European citizens will tend to expect either an encompassing polity aiming to complement and empower nations or a powerful political system competing with them for sovereignty” (Duchesne/Frognier 2008: 156, cf. as well Martinotti/Stefanizzi 1995). Since the role of national identity in an attitude model explaining EU support depends on context, some remarks about the situation in Central and Eastern Europe around the time of accession must be made.

2.2.3.7  Multiple identities in Central and Eastern Europe

Generally, the findings from the Western context can be transferred to the CEE region. National identity appears to play a crucial role in evaluating the supranational system in CEE as well; yet, as in Western countries, the relation between national and European identity and EU support is complex and not straightforward. However, evidence of a positive effect of national identity on European identity and on EU support (Pollack 2002, Whitefield et al. 2006) appears to prevail.

First of all, in CEE affective attitudes, which do not require much knowledge of the EU, may be important in explaining EU support. It is likely that citizens from this region rely on affective attitudes since the EU appears even more remote and complex to these citizens because of their lack of socialization in the European system. In this context, the inclusion of feelings towards the national
community and European community into a model of EU support is even more important.

As stated above, before and after accession, a large majority of the political elites and population at large saw the EU as an organization helping to maintain democracy and to enhance economic development – the dominant national political objectives (Zielonka 2007a: 23-43). Therefore, the EU was not regarded as a threat to national interests. Rather, the EU was seen as a protector of the nation-state’s interest and values because the EU pursued the same political aims as the nation-states. This was communicated almost unanimously to the population by the political elites who were united in their support for the EU (Ehin 2001: 32, Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 188). Hence, in this period of time, it was simply possible for Central and Eastern Europeans to include any positive attitudes towards Europe into their value system, which generally encompasses positive attitudes and strong feelings towards the national community and its values. National identity was very important for Central and Eastern Europeans since independence from the Soviet sphere of influence and the recent introduction of national sovereignty, which strengthened the national self-confidence and the belief in the strength of their own country.

European and national identities had never been in conflict in the early years of Central and Eastern European rapprochement to the EU because a strong sense of national identity was combined with uplifting European feelings. The wish to return to Europe was strong as well. This wish encompassed the return to the family of European peoples living in peace and political and economic freedom. This return to Europe got its manifestation with the accession to the EU. Only then were the Central and Eastern Europeans fully back in the heart of Europe – a place that they always felt they belonged. Under such circumstances, positive relationships between national identity and European identity were assumed.

The special circumstances in CEE lead to the conclusion that not only national and European identities go together but that national identity and EU support are positively related as well. European integration does not necessarily contradict national interests (Ehin 2001: 37-39, Hooghe/Marks 2005: 431-436). The accession to the EU helps CEE countries to fulfill national political goals like the improvement of the economic system and democracy, and marks the official return to Europe. The positive effect of EU membership for the nation-state and the advantages of EU membership for the national community can be seen by large numbers of the elites and citizens (Zielonka 2007a: 23-43). Citizens recognizing these relationships are able to combine even stronger feelings of national identity with EU support. Hence, a positive direct effect from national identity to EU support is expected. As the needs and goals of the national political community can be fulfilled within the EU and as the national community’s interests and val-
ues can be protected within the EU, national identity enhances EU support – independently from the existence of a European identity.

To sum it up: National identity – the less demanding, affective evaluation of one’s own nation – can also be used for evaluating the distant and complex EU. When developing a model of EU support in Central and Eastern Europe and when determining the position and role of national identity in this model, the relationship between multiple identities and their influence on EU support must be considered especially with regards to the political context.

In the next chapter, I will summarize the implications for a suitable model from all theoretical assumptions made in this work. Then I will introduce my model on support for the EU in CEE and I will elaborate on hypotheses concerning the different predictors of support in this model.

2.2.4 Implications for a model of support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

In chapter 2.1.2.3, I elaborated on Fuchs’ model of generalized support for the EU. I identified Fuchs’ theoretical model as a successful attempt with respect to combining research on regime support with EU research. Nevertheless, I detected a theoretical weakness concerning the integration of national attitudes as determinants of EU support. I tried to improve on this weakness by systematically elaborating on these ‘additional determinants’ from the perspectives of EU research and cognitive and social psychology. Furthermore, I pointed out that these determinants play a crucial role if new post-communist member states are studied; therefore, it would be useful and necessary to formulate an enhanced theoretical model that adequately depicts the position of the relevant national attitudes. Even though I am also interested in the role of national identity, the main focus of this study is on national attitudes that serve as cognitive heuristics.

According to findings based on cognitive psychology, national attitudes can serve as judgmental shortcuts because they are easier to retrieve from long-term memory than other political attitudes, including European attitudes. Hence, it follows that national attitudes influence EU attitudes – as Fuchs (2003: 37) stated – and not vice versa. Moreover, shortcuts only make sense if they can compensate for missing knowledge and if they are somehow related to the issue for which they are thought to be shortcuts. Only specific national attitudes are used as shortcuts, and these specific national attitudes only influence specific European attitudes. This leads to the following changes to Fuchs’ model: Two predictors of EU support deduced from general support literature, namely systemic and democratic performance, are influenced by national systemic performance and national democratic performance, respectively. The specification of these national atti-
tudes and their differentiation were a part of Fuchs’ empirical test of his model, indeed, but they were missing in his theoretical model. Therefore, I have explained the theoretical specification and differentiation of these national attitudes in the preceding chapters. The insights from these chapters have led to the modification of the theoretical model in such a way that relevant national attitudes affect the equivalent specific EU attitudes, which then in turn affect generalized EU support. In contrast to Fuchs’ theoretical assumptions, apart from the indirect influence of attitudes towards national performance on EU support, a direct influence cannot be expected because cognitive psychology does not provide any indication for this relationship. A direct relationship seems implausible because national attitudes identified as relevant shortcuts have no clear or concrete connection to the broad concept of EU support.

Considerations about national identity have shown that this attitude must be seen separately from the other national attitudes mentioned above because this affective attitude does not serve as a shortcut. However, social psychological assumptions about multiple identities point out that national identity – as the primary political identity of most citizens – can directly influence European identity, which in turn influences EU support. In addition, national identity can directly affect EU support. These complex relations between national identity, European identity, and EU support resemble Fuchs’ ideas and they are, furthermore, secured by social psychological research about political identities.

Remarks about opinion formation on the EU in CEE lead to another implication for the EU support model. In this context, a national attitude, which is not explicitly modeled in Fuchs’ EU model, seems to be relevant to such an extent that the model should be amended. I have previously stated that the EU is a very distant and remote political object for the citizens in CEE; therefore, they rely, among other things, on political elites as opinion leaders. These opinion leaders are the elites who organized the transformation process and the accession to the EU. Since there has been tremendous unity among the elites on EU membership and the party systems in these countries are still volatile (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 188), it is not the parties that have much influence on opinion formation about the EU.41 It is more about formal political institutions that have been set up

41 Fuchs’ model does not include party identification as a determinant of support. Because this variable is often said to be relevant in the Western context in explaining EU support, I shortly discuss their position in CEE. There is no need to extend Fuchs’ model by this variable because the characteristics of the party systems in CEE make an effect of party identification on EU support rather unlikely. Firstly, the party systems are volatile; new parties occur, while others vanish, making the utilization of the whole concept of party identification questionable in this context. Furthermore, some of the existing parties change their stance on Europe, which makes it very difficult for ordinary citizens to find out the current party opinion on Europe (Tverdova/Anderson 2004: 206). Thirdly, all
as democratic institutions after the end of communism (e.g. the president, the prime minister, the parliament), as well as the political elites working within these institutions. Research on EU support in CEE shows that trust in the political actors affects EU support (Ehin 2001, Fidrmuc/Doyle 2005). However, it is more likely that there exists an indirect relationship – similar to other national attitudes. It is probable that trust in national actors leads to trust in European actors due to the fact that the latter are seen as partners with whom the national actors have worked together and negotiated the accession (confirmed for the Western context: McLaren 2007, for a parallel positive or negative evaluation of both political levels in CEE: Fölsz/Tóka 2006). Trust in European actors in turn affects EU support. This relationship between national and European actors has intensified after the EU accession because these interdependencies have been institutionalized in the European multi-level system.

Because of the crucial role of political actors in helping Central and Eastern Europeans to form opinions and the interdependencies of national and European political actors (especially within the Council of the EU and the European Council), the enhanced model must capture the central role of the national political actors. This aspect is only implicitly found in Fuchs’ model, namely in his assumption on the influence of national performances on EU performances, because performance has been defined above “as the evaluation of what political actors do and the outcomes of these actions” (Roller 2005: 20). This is inadequate for the countries to be analyzed in my study as I assume that the evaluation of specific national political actors, i.e. the evaluation of democratic institutions like the parliament, directly affects the evaluation of European actors and this evaluation in turn influences EU support. To cope with the relevance of the political actors in the attitude structure of ordinary citizens from CEE I will introduce an explicit predictor embracing national political actors as a shortcut for evaluating European political actors. This evaluation of general democratic political actors is a highly generalized form of political performance. It is a more long-lasting attitude because it is about very general evaluations of various democratic actors, which are rather uncoupled from day-to-day politics. The performance can be seen as a summary measure of the activities of political actors, which means it can be guided by both standards of evaluation – instrumental and value-based standards. This newly introduced dimension of performance is not directly re-

main parties – parties with a considerable share of votes or seats in parliament – more or less supported EU membership during the period I analyze. The share of clearly Euroskeptic parties was low in all eight countries and nowhere did such parties control government or parliament. Even if there were Euroskeptic parties, they did not dominate the public sphere or the political processes (Taggart/Szczerbiak 2001, Kopecký/Mudde 2002, Lewis 2003, Beichelt 2004b, Bielasiak 2006, Fölsz/Tóka 2006, Kopecký/Holsteyn 2006).
flected in the concepts of systemic or democratic performance. Therefore, I amend the model of support by including the concept of generalized performance since this type of evaluation appears to be so important that it ought to be modeled separately (cf. as well Ehin 2001, McLaren 2007).

The position of the concept of generalized performance resembles the position of the other two performance concepts. I assume that the evaluation of national actors (generalized performance of the nation-state) serves as a heuristic for the evaluation of European actors (generalized performance of the EU), which in turn affects EU support. One might argue that generalized performance is influenced by systemic and democratic performance, so that this performance should have another position in the model. For instance, generalized performance of the EU should be modeled between the two ‘classical’ EU performances and EU support. However, I consider all types of performance to be generalized attitudes, which means that generalized performance is not much more generalized than the other performances. Perceptions of performance generally encompass experiences with political actors, which develop into an overall evaluation of these actors, and this principle guides my understanding of all three types of performance. Therefore, a parallel alignment of generalized, systemic, and democratic performance is appropriate.

2.2.5 A model of support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

In the last chapter, I introduced the assumed determinants of support for the EU in CEE and elaborated theoretically on their relevance for EU support by explaining their role and position in the attitude structure underlying EU support and on their relations to each other and with the dependent variable. Having presented these theoretical considerations, I will now focus on the attitude structure underlying EU support from a more technically point of view, i.e. I will explain how I conceived of this attitude structure. All theoretical considerations result in a model, which I will present graphically so as to make it easier to follow my description of the model; at the same time, this model is the starting point for the following empirical analyses.

First of all, the model should fulfill two aims. Firstly, it should explain support for the EU, i.e. the model should include the attitudinal variables that are said to be relevant in explaining EU support. I concentrate on the determinants that Fuchs has deduced from literature on support and the EU, as well as on factors characterized as relevant according to literature on shortcuts. Secondly, the model should represent the attitude structure underlying EU support. This includes the localization of the positioning of the relevant variables in the model.
and their relations to each other and to the dependent variable, namely EU support. In doing so, I am primarily interested in national attitudes serving as shortcuts; thus, the model should capture the position and relations of national attitudes with other attitudes as it has been theoretically derived from cognitive psychological literature. The second aim directs my focus on the attitudes of individuals. And as I work in the tradition of research on support and political culture, my model only includes attitudes as explanatory variables (see Chapter 1.4.3).

Some preliminary remarks are needed to point out the intension behind this model and to clarify why it is modeled in the way shown in Figure 3. The model of generalized support for the EU in CEE is illustrated as a path model to capture the supposed attitude structure adequately. This is a useful depiction because it allows for visualizing the presumed relations between the single constructs in the model. A path model is especially suitable and appropriate in my case because it shows direct and indirect effects on the dependent variable at a glance.

Figure 3: A model of generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe

![Path model diagram]

All variables from which an arrow points directly at the dependent variable influence the dependent variable in a direct way. All variables on the left hand side of the model, from which an arrow points directly at another predictor and not at the dependent variable, influence the dependent variable indirectly. Indirect means that there is an effect from an independent variable on a dependent varia-
ble, indeed, but this effect is transferred by another independent variable. Technically speaking, a chain of causation is on hand, in which one variable (X₁) affects another variable (X₂), which in turn affects the dependent variable (Y). The first variable in the chain, X₁, is an indirect – and not a direct – cause of the dependent variable Y. The variable in the middle – in this example, X₂ – is called intervening variable or mediator variable. More specifically, the chain described is an example of a complete or full mediation because there is no direct effect assumed from X₁ to Y (Agresti/Finlay 2009: 308, cf. as well James/Brett 1984, Baron/Kenny 1986, Frazier et al. 2004, Cheung/Lau 2008). Three such chains of causation can be found in my model: Attitudes towards national performances directly affect specific EU attitudes, which in turn directly affect support for the EU. The specific EU attitudes function as mediator variables. In contrast, national identity influences EU support directly and indirectly. Regarding the indirect influence of national identity on EU support, European identity is a mediator variable. Hence, these chains form a partial mediation because there is a direct and an indirect effect from X₁ to Y (Agresti/Finlay 2009: 310, cf. as well Urban/Mayerl 2008: 303).

In detail, the dependent variable, generalized support for the European Union, is influenced by eight determinants. Four of these determinants refer to the EU, or, more specifically, to specific aspects of the EU. They measure generalized, systemic, and democratic performance of the EU, as well as European identity. Each of these predictors is affected by its national equivalent. More precisely: national generalized performance influences EU generalized performance, national systemic performance affects EU systemic performance, national democratic performance has an effect on EU democratic performance, and national identity impacts European identity. The three national predictors dealing with national performances only have an indirect effect on EU support because these effects are fully mediated through the equivalent specific EU determinants. Additionally, national identity influences EU support directly, as well as indirectly.

The model consists of three levels: firstly, on the left hand side, the national level encompasses specific national attitudes; secondly, in the center of the depiction, the EU procedural level includes specific EU attitudes; and thirdly, the EU structural level comprises of generalized support for the EU regime.  

42 The labeling is borrowed from Fuchs’ level model (2002). To simplify things, I subsume European identity under the umbrella of the EU procedural level, even though identifications with political communities are generally not part of the level model and the procedural level in this model specifically because they do not represent generalized attitudes towards political authorities. This can be justified because the levels in my model should mainly represent all determinants of EU support separated into the political levels they address: the national level versus the European level.
The explicit specification of direct and indirect effects, as well as the arrangement of the determinants from the left hand side to the right hand side, tries to adequately capture the presumed attitude structure. This way of modeling shows that the determinants differ in their distance to the dependent variable, i.e. specific EU attitudes are closer to EU support than national attitudes. National attitudes are situated the farthest away from all other variables because they serve as shortcuts in three cases for the specific EU attitudes, which in turn influence generalized EU support. This order of the variables describes the opinion formation process in its temporal dimension: Attitudes towards the nation-state are activated before specific EU attitudes are activated because the national attitudes are being used to make evaluations of specific EU aspects. Subsequently, the specific EU attitudes that have been formed in such a way are added up to an overall evaluation of the EU, which is ultimately expressed in a generalized support or opposition to the EU.

If this theoretically postulated relation is neglected – as in many studies on EU support – the influence of national attitudes might be incorrectly estimated. A disregard of the chains of causation can reduce some effects while enhancing others leading to a misinterpretation of the relevance of different variables (Shrout/Bolger 2002: 429-430, Urban/Mayerl 2008: 302-305). Such an inappropriate modeling of national attitudes can be one reason for different findings concerning the explanatory power of various national attitudes in different empirical studies on EU support.

This leads to another important point: if a model with complex relations between the determinants is theoretically proposed, the chains of causation must be empirically tested in an appropriate way as well. A proper method to test path models with direct and indirect effects is structural equation modeling (SEM), which will consequently be used in this study to test the depicted model empirically. This method makes it possible to decide if the theoretically assumed attitude structure can be confirmed empirically. SEM also allows for a detailed analysis of all direct and indirect effects in the model.

The model is a recursive model which means that all effects in the model point in one direction. Interdependent relations, i.e. mutually dependent effects are excluded. My theoretical assumption is that attitudes towards the known nation-state serve as shortcuts influencing attitudes towards the unknown, remote EU. Therefore, I expect that national attitudes influence specific EU attitudes, but I deny an inverted relationship. This means that no interdependencies between national and EU attitudes are modeled because they cannot be secured by literature on cognitive psychology and EU support. With reference to the relationship between specific EU attitudes and EU support, the situation is not that clear-cut. According to literature on support, the proposed causal direction can be assumed but the inverted relation could be imagined as well (see Chapter
2.1.1). As it is the aim of this study to explain EU support and to identify the underlying attitude structure, the causal relationship is functional and in accordance with literature related to the topic. Both research traditions – research on regime support and research on EU support – predominantly propose and test this direction of influence (Fuchs/Rohrschneider 2001, Fuchs 2002, 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Therefore, I concentrate on the appropriate measurement of the dominant direction of influence and leave a testing of a complex model, including interdependencies, aside.

The chains of causation between the different levels in the model – the national level, the EU procedural level, and the EU structural level – are clarified right now. There is one point to be made about the relationships between the variables within a level. It is theoretically plausible that there are relations between the three national performances and the three EU performances, respectively. Even if the performances cover three separate dimensions of performance, it is likely that these dimensions are not completely distinct from one another. Moreover, the evaluation of one performance can influence the evaluation of another performance because the concepts belong to the same level and the opinion formation on each performance follows similar cognitive-evaluative principles. Because the focus of this study is on the relation between the levels (and not within the levels), I will not further elaborate on this point. However, SEM gives me the opportunity to model the assumed interdependencies between the performances as covariances in the empirical model to capture the underlying attitude structure as adequately as possible. I will use this opportunity but I will not interpret the findings in detail. The inclusion of these interdependencies is merely to ensure the goodness of fit of the specified statistical path model.

This model is not only designed to explain EU support and to analyze the attitude structure underlying support. It should also be used to describe temporal changes in EU support and in the attitude structure, and to describe differences among persons with different levels of sophistication. These two variables – time and political sophistication – are not depicted in the figure above but they can both be statistically included in the model as moderator variables despite the dissimilarity in their nature. A moderator effect – also frequently called interaction effect – is found if the effect of $X_1$ on $Y$ changes depending on the value of a moderator $X_2$, i.e. the level of the moderator influences the effect of an independent variable on a dependent one. Such an influence can alter the direction of influence from a positive to a negative influence or vice versa, or it can alter the strength of the effect (Baron/Kenny 1986, Agresti/Finlay 2009: 311). To take an example from my model: a moderator can change the strength of the effects between national attitudes serving as shortcuts and the equivalent specific EU attitudes.
In more detail, my first moderator variable is time, which theoretically changes the effects in the model. I assume that the relevance of various paths in the model changes in the course of time as the countries studied developed from candidate countries to EU member states. More specific assumptions about the effects of time as a moderator variable will be formulated in the next chapter. A second possible moderator is political sophistication. Sophistication as a moderator means that certain effects in the model change as the level of sophistication changes. The theoretical chapter on the influence of political sophistication on EU support and the underlying attitude structure will follow the chapter on the hypotheses concerning the attitude structure and temporal change. Specific hypotheses on which relations are affected by a sophistication-moderator are explained after the role of sophistication is explained theoretically.

The described specification of the model seems to be appropriate to fulfill the preliminary aims: explaining support for the EU in CEE and the corresponding underlying attitude structure. The chains of causation, i.e. the assumed direction of the relations presented in the model, and the relative relevance of the single determinants in explaining EU support have to be further discussed. Therefore, in the following chapter, I will develop hypotheses with reference to findings on EU support as well as cognitive and social psychological assumptions. In the center of these considerations is the status of national attitudes serving as heuristics in the Central and Eastern European context.

2.3 Hypotheses

The whole model, which has been explained in technical terms in the last chapter, should be tested to determine the relevance of the predictors of EU support and the theoretically postulated attitude structure underlying EU support. Special attention is paid to the role of national attitudes serving as shortcuts. In this chapter, I will formulate hypotheses deduced from the theoretical considerations made above. These hypotheses are useful to structure model testing and to scrutinize the theoretical assumptions on a systematic and comprehensive basis. Furthermore, they draw attention to the relations in the model that are particularly related to the research questions.

Concerning the formulation and the order of the hypotheses, it is useful to go back to two remarks that have already been made. First, because this study focuses on the attitude structure of citizens from the new EU member states from CEE, general hypotheses that apply to the whole region are formulated. Second, because national performances as shortcuts and national identity follow different logics, these two concepts are treated separately when building hypotheses.
In this chapter, I arrange the hypotheses according to the political level, to which they apply. Firstly, I describe the hypotheses concerning the influence of specific EU attitudes on EU support. Secondly, I concern myself with the effects of national attitudes. Within these two categories, I differentiate between hypotheses on the direction of the influence, and hypotheses on the relative strength of the influence of various attitudes.

The first research question concerns attitudes explaining support for the EU in CEE, with a special emphasis on the role of national attitudes serving as heuristics. In order for national attitudes to function as heuristics, significant effects from specific EU attitudes – generalized, systemic, and democratic performance – on generalized EU support are necessary. These effects are theoretically expected because these causal relations are a part of Fuchs’ general model of regime support (see Figure 1). The same can be said for the effect of European identity. With reference to this model, I expect direct positive effects of all specific EU attitudes on EU support, i.e. the better the evaluation of the EU performances, the higher the EU support, and also the more a CEE citizen identifies with the European community, the higher the EU support.

\textit{Hypothesis 1: All specific EU attitudes have a positive effect on generalized support for the EU.}

Regarding the relative explanatory power of these four specific EU attitudes, differences are likely. Assumptions on these differences are important for the relevance of heuristics on EU support because the strength of the effects of national attitudes on EU support is dependent on the explanatory power of the specific EU determinants.

Due to the short duration of EU membership of the CEE countries and their recent political and economic transformation processes, I assume that instrumental, economic, and democracy stabilizing reasons are the center of attention when evaluating the EU generally. The constructs related to EU performance may be stronger predictors of EU support than identification with the European community. The lower explanatory power of the affective component is presumed because different aspects of integration develop at a different pace. Instrumental acceptance evolves faster than affective involvement because identity is demanding. Identity needs a cognitive awareness of the group (here the European community), as well as the subjective feeling of belonging to this group and such feeling must be connected to the EU regime so that identity can unfold its impact on support. If the EU is evaluated only a few years after the accession, the performance of the system has priority because the various perceived and expected benefits from the EU and the real functioning of the multi-level system are crucial for citizens from new member states, whereas European identity could not...
have fully unfolded its explanatory power yet. Thus, the following hypothesis is deduced:

*Hypothesis 2: The influence of every single aspect of performance of the EU – generalized, systemic, or democratic performance – on generalized support for the EU is stronger than the influence of European identity.*

Comparing the relative strengths of influence between different EU performances, I assume that systemic performance is the strongest among them because it comprises economic performance. The economic dimension of the EU may still be more salient in people’s minds than anything else. It is the dimension that most people associate with the EU because keywords like the Common Market or EU subventions permanently circulate in the media. Even if other authors presume a dominance of value-based determinants of EU support in the Eastern context (e.g. Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006b: 6), I suspect that the economic dimension around the time of accession was of greater importance because the CEE countries were functioning democracies by then, and the stabilizing function regarding the democracy of the EU had lost its importance compared to its function of improving living conditions in economic terms. Hence, I formulate my third hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3: The influence of systemic performance of the EU on generalized support for the EU is stronger than every single influence of all other determinants.*

After having presented the hypotheses concerning the relation between specific EU attitudes and EU support, I will discuss the effects of national attitudes serving as shortcuts. If the arguments from heuristic literature apply to opinion formation regarding European issues, attitudes towards the nation-state should influence attitudes towards the EU.

Citizens evaluate the political performances of both political levels in the same way, i.e. they are seen either simultaneously positively or simultaneously negatively. When transferring opinions about the known system to the unknown system, national attitudes are transported indiscriminately to the European level. National attitudes as judgmental shortcuts are positively related to specific European attitudes, which, in turn, are positively related to EU support. Thus, the indirect effect of national attitudes on EU support is positive as well. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4: In addition to the determinants representing specific EU attitudes, attitudes towards the performances of the nation-state have an indirect positive effect on generalized support for the EU in CEE. Performances of the nation-state have a positive effect on the equivalent performances of the EU, and, mediated through EU performances, a positive effect on generalized support for the EU as well.*
A positive relationship is assumed between national identity, European identity, and EU support. According to social identity theory, the two identities can exist simultaneously in the attitude structure of citizens without being in conflict with each other. National identity is by far more frequently part of the self-concept of an individual than European identity; however, if the two identities go together, their relationship is a positive one. Even if Central and Eastern Europeans strongly identify with their own nation especially in light of the newly won sovereignty after the end of communism, they combine this attachment with a sense of belonging to Europe or the European community.

Furthermore, the identification with the nation-state is not an obstacle for supporting the EU. In contrast, the EU is seen as an organization helping to promote national interests, like peace, democracy, and economic development. The ‘return to Europe’ was a national goal, supported by those who identified with the national community. To sum it up, national identity is positively related to European identity and to EU support. Hence, the fifth hypothesis follows:

_Hypothesis 5: In addition to the determinants representing specific EU attitudes, national identity has a direct and an indirect positive effect on generalized support for the EU in CEE._

5a: National identity has a positive direct effect on EU support.
5b: National identity has a positive effect on European identity, and, mediated through the latter, a positive effect on EU support as well.

Regarding the relative strength of influence of different national attitudes serving as shortcuts, I concentrate on the relation of national attitudes on EU support. I focus on these indirect effects because I do not expect any differences concerning the relative strength of influence of different national attitudes on their equivalent specific EU attitudes. Such differences would be implausible because the national attitudes were selected to be meaningful shortcuts according to cognitive psychological theory. Attitudes serving as meaningful shortcuts have – by nature – a strong positive effect on attitudes towards unknown objects for which they are shortcuts. Therefore, the three causal relations between national attitudes and their equivalent EU attitudes are expected to be almost equally strong.

This expectation has implications for the assumed indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support. All expected differences regarding the strength of these indirect relationships occur because of differences in the relationship between specific EU attitudes and EU support. Therefore, the assumptions I make on the relative strength of the indirect effects follow the hypotheses concerning the relative strength of influence of the specific EU attitudes.
Hypothesis 6: The indirect influence of systemic performance of the nation-state on generalized support for the EU is stronger than every other single indirect influence of the other attitudes towards the nation-state serving as shortcuts.

The second research question concerns the development of the attitude structure underlying generalized support for the EU in CEE in the period around the accession, which includes the time shortly before accession to the EU, right after the accession, and up to three years of EU membership. Because my model is designed for new member states, the period that can be analyzed especially well with this model is the period shortly after the accession. My analysis starts in 2003, the year of the referendums on EU membership in all CEE countries – the moment CEE citizens for the first time had a say in Europe. Then I look at the year of accession, and eventually, the first years of EU membership until 2007, when EU membership has become a part of everyday life. Hence, the selected period comprises a time in which the EU develops from a far distant political object to reality for CEE citizens, even though, presumably, the EU will always remain somewhat distant and remote. However, my assumption is that the CEE citizens become more and more familiar with the EU over the period under investigation, and this assumption drives the hypotheses related to the second research question.

The temporal development can have an effect on the direction of influence of some determinants in the model of EU support. The determinants dealing with specific EU attitudes are not affected since their positive influence on support is secured by concepts from research on regime support, and the duration of being a part of a regime does not influence the positive relation between the process and the structural level. The direction of influence of national attitudes depends on whether these attitudes serve as shortcuts during the whole period or whether they are no longer needed. Presumably, national attitudes are used as shortcuts during the whole period under investigation because various empirical studies have shown that shortcuts are used even in established member states (e.g. Anderson 1998, Hooghe/Marks 2005). Therefore, a simultaneous evaluation of the national and European level is expected cross-temporally because a separation of the two systems in the attitude structure of CEE citizens is unlikely. This might not be self-evident because, during normal times, national elites either use the EU as a scapegoat for unpopular decisions or, inversely, depict themselves as bringing home the bacon from negotiations in Brussels, claiming their success against the ‘nasty’ EU. Although such occurrences might happen during the first years of EU membership, they are less likely than many years after membership. However, I expect that the perceived amalgamation of the national and European level trumps the possible differences between them in the eyes of CEE citizens. In addition, it is assumed that national identity can still be combined with posi-
tive evaluations of the EU because the circumstances affecting the positive relation between national identity, European identity and EU support have not substantially changed in CEE around the accession: European integration has never contradicted national interests, and the majority of the elites have continuously supported EU membership. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 7:** All determinants in the model – specific EU attitudes and national attitudes – have a positive effect on generalized support for the EU during the whole period around the accession.

The formulation of the second research question emphasizes the following assumption: the relevance of single determinants of generalized support for the EU in CEE – and the relevance of national attitudes serving as shortcuts in particular – changes over the course of time. Technically speaking, the explanatory power of single concepts varies depending on the point in time of EU membership.

First of all, I expect continuous changes, meaning that the influence of some determinants steadily decreased between 2003 and 2007, and the influence of other determinants steadily increased in this period. The reason is that the EU gets more and more attention from and provides relevance for the CEE citizens, and this development might be mirrored in the citizens’ attitude structure. But as the attitudes towards the EU are said to be highly volatile especially in candidate countries or new member states (Cichowski 2000: 1270-1273, similar Beichelt 2004a: 62), developments in leaps and bounds are possible as well. Therefore, if the influence of different determinants does not steadily change, at least changes by trend are to be expected, i.e. the influence of different determinants shows upward trends or downward trends, respectively, from the beginning of the period analyzed to the end of this period.

The changes in the influence of national attitudes on their equivalent EU attitudes and on EU support during the period under investigation are at the center of the second research question. As their influence on support is mediated through the specific EU attitudes, I first elaborate on two hypotheses concerning the influence of specific EU attitudes during the period analyzed. I expect that the influence of EU systemic performance decreases over time because citizens become more and more aware of other aspects of European integration, like the political dimension, including elections to the EP, the European citizenship, or, generally, the work of the EU institutions. Nonetheless, systemic performance of the EU will be the strongest predictor of EU support during the whole period, but its influence decreases as the economic dimension loses its former dominant position in the attitude structure.

**Hypothesis 8:** The influence of systemic performance of the EU on generalized support for the EU decreases over time.
In contrast, the influence of European identity is expected to increase over time. Identification with a community develops over time. Therefore, longer and more intensive contact with the EU helps to generate the awareness of the existence of such a European community, and the connection of this community to the European regime. Furthermore, the affective part of identity is likely to be transferred to the EU because symbolic signs of the EU or European citizenship become a part of daily life after EU membership, thus intensifying the feeling of belonging to the European community. For example, EU flags fly high, European citizenship is imprinted on passports, and license plates carry the EU flag. If the affective moment of the EU becomes more accentuated, it will be more relevant for the overall evaluation of the EU regime.

**Hypothesis 9: The influence of European identity on generalized support for the EU increases over time.**

The presumed development of the relevance of national attitudes concerning the performance of the nation-state is best secured by cognitive psychological theory. Shortcuts are especially useful if a remote or distant object is to be evaluated under circumstances marked by minimal information and limited knowledge. For Central and Eastern Europeans, the remoteness and distance of the EU decreases through membership; therefore, the use of shortcuts will decrease as well because they are less necessary to form opinions about the EU. More citizens develop EU attitudes independently from national attitudes, and they are able to differentiate between the two political levels. Nonetheless, shortcuts continue to be used during the whole period because even citizens in established member states use them despite their longer experience with the EU. National attitudes are influential during the whole period analyzed but their direct influence on specific EU attitudes and, in addition, their indirect influence on EU support decreases as experience with the EU increases. As the latter effect is composed of the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and the influence of specific EU attitudes on EU support, it is assumed that the reduction of the overall indirect influence of national attitudes on EU support is mainly due to the decreasing effects of national attitudes and to a lesser extent due to changing effects of specific EU attitudes.

I do not expect that one of the shortcuts changes its influence on its equivalent EU attitude more extremely than the others. Therefore, I do not assume any differences between the influences of various shortcuts concerning the level of reduction.

**Hypothesis 10: The influence of national attitudes serving as shortcuts decreases over time.**

10a: The influence of every single national attitude on its equivalent specific EU attitude decreases over time.
10b: The indirect influence of every single national attitude on generalized support for the EU decreases over time.

With regard to the influence of national identity on either European identity or on EU support, the development over time seems to be complex. The effect of national identity on European identity is expected to decrease because with increasing experience with the EU, citizens can develop more sophisticated multiple identities and they are in a better situation to describe themselves as nationals, Europeans, both, or none of the above. In CEE, national identity has generally been a popular attachment to a political community, and a European identity could simply be added when ‘returning to Europe’ became salient. Over time, European identity became recognized as an independent attitude with its own values and symbols as Central and Eastern Europeans learned more and more about the European community. Hence, the relation between the two political identities weakens around the accession. As the effect of European identity on EU support is expected to increase, both effects cancel each other out; therefore, the indirect effect of national identity on EU support remains stable over time. Regarding the development of the strength of the direct effect of national identity on EU support, no changes over time are expected because, as said above, the circumstances affecting this relation have not substantially changed in CEE around the accession.

Hypothesis 11: The influence of national identity on generalized support for the EU remains stable over time.
3 Political sophistication and the attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

3.1 Heterogeneity assumption

In the previous chapters I have explained theoretically that my model of support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe applies to the citizens in these new member states in the period around the accession. The model has been designed to capture the attitude structure of citizens in countries with little experience with the remote and complex European system. The underlying assumption is that all citizens in these countries react in a similar way when they are asked about their opinions on the EU; in other words, they use heuristics from the nation-state to form opinions on the EU. In the following empirical analyses, I will test whether this assumption on CEE citizens holds. Therefore, the proposed model is tested for the entire population of CEE. There are good arguments that say the model is suitable for the ordinary citizens overall; however, because of the centrality of the heuristics in my model, a logical follow-up question is whether all citizens use these attitudes to the same extent. There are other good arguments that say individuals differ in their use of shortcuts even if they all need them.

Up to this point my argument has been guided by the untested assumption of the homogeneity of the CEE citizens. Or as Sniderman et al. put it more drastically: “It is simply assumed that people tend to make up their minds in more or less the same way, so much so that only one causal model is required – one set of causal factors, the same for all members of the public, arranged in one causal sequence, the same for all” (Sniderman et al. 1991: 19, cf. as well Zaller 1992: 18). As suggested subliminally in this statement, it is too simple to assume homogeneity among citizens regarding their attitude structure. Rather “[p]eople make up their minds in different ways” (Sniderman et al. 1991: 8). With this statement, the authors brought back into the discussion the idea of systematic variations across citizens’ opinion formation processes. The question asks which individual characteristic is decisive for this heterogeneity. Even if “no one has yet produced a ‘general theory of heterogeneity’” (Bartle 2005: 657), the literature theoretically and empirically reveals that political sophistication is the decisive factor influencing opinion formation processes and attitude structures because it may affect several steps in information processing from the exposure to the retrieval of information (Kinder 2006: 206-208, Converse 1964: 213, Shanteau 1988, 1992, Sniderman et al. 1991: 20-21, Zaller 1992: 18-21, Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996: 130).
Political sophistication affects opinion formation in a way that can technically be described as interaction or moderation, i.e., opinion formation varies with the level of political sophistication.

Therefore, it is necessary to elaborate theoretically on the “sophistication-interaction hypothesis” (Sniderman 1993: 235) because this heterogeneity assumption can be seen as a well-proven fact in voting and attitude studies. Political sophistication is especially relevant regarding my model of support for the EU because of the inclusion of heuristics. Heuristics are used under the condition of minimal interest and limited information; they are important in my model because the relationship between the EU and its citizens is said to fulfill this condition. Therefore, it is almost self-evident that the level of political sophistication influences the importance of the heuristics in the model.

To describe the moderating effect of political sophistication on the attitude structure underlying EU support, it is necessary to define and explain the concept of political sophistication. In addition to the definition, it is also important to include some remarks about the measurement of political sophistication. It is useful to discuss this point even in the theoretical part of this work because it is needed to understand the existing empirical findings in the following chapters. The chapters on the empirical findings regarding political sophistication deal with the effects of sophistication on the opinion formation process, the use of judgmental shortcuts, and the role of sophistication in the European context. These findings are then transferred to my model. I formulate several hypotheses deduced from the stated considerations about political sophistication. These hypotheses mainly concern the moderating effect of political sophistication on the use of heuristics.

### 3.2 Defining and measuring political sophistication

The term ‘political sophistication’ is only one label referring to “an individual’s stored political cognition” (Luskin 2002a: 281). Other terms with similar meanings are political expertise, political knowledge, political information, political awareness, or political cognitive complexity. According to Luskin, these terms differ only slightly: Sophistication, expertise, awareness and cognitive complexity emphasize organized cognition; information is about mere cognition, while knowledge is about correct information (Luskin 2003: 238, Luskin/Bullock 2003: 281).

There are other individual and contextual characteristics producing heterogeneity regarding the opinion formation process. According to Steenbergen and Lodge, the other important characteristics are the motivation of the decision maker, the importance of the issue, and information-presentation effects (2003: 143).
Despite the slightly different connotations, the concepts are often used interchangeably; they are defined in almost the same way and they are measured by similar indicators.\footnote{I go for the term sophistication, but I use the term knowledge as well for the reason of linguistic variety and because this term is heavily used in literature as well.}

Political sophistication cannot be defined without reference to cognitive psychology, especially to information processing and assumptions on the working of memory. Some preliminary information about cognitive psychology has been described at length in chapter 2.2.3.3, which I refer to in the following paragraphs. A well-known and convincing definition of political sophistication is formulated by Luskin. His definition refers to the concept of political belief systems; thus, Luskin’s definition ties in with an established concept in research on public opinion introduced by Converse. In his article from 1964, Converse defines a belief system as “a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence” (1964: 207). As has been stated above, the concept of belief system fits nicely with the newer schema concept because they are similar ways to describe the structure in memory. Based on this definition, Luskin identifies three dimensions along which a belief system can vary, and which in turn define political sophistication: (1) its size, i.e. the number of cognitions a belief system contains; (2) its range, i.e. its coverage of the political universe from specialized to general information; and (3) its organization or in Converse’s terminology, constraint, i.e. the extent to which the cognitions are interconnected (Luskin 1987: 859). According to this definition a less sophisticated person differs from a sophisticated person in these three dimensions. Luskin concisely describes what characterizes a sophisticated person: “A person is politically sophisticated to the extent to which his or her [political belief system] is large, wide-ranging, and highly constrained” (1987: 860).

A similar definition is suggested in an influential book, “What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters”, by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996). They used the term political knowledge and defined this concept “as the range of factual information about politics that is stored in long-term memory” (1996: 10). The first term that must be clarified is ‘range’, which corresponds with Luskin’s definition. Next, the word ‘information’ distinguishes knowledge from attitudes, values, or opinions; the word ‘factual’ indicates that knowledge is about correct information and does not include incorrect information or information that cannot be tested for correctness. Furthermore, they specified what kind of knowledge is explicitly political to distinguish it from knowledge of other fields.
like literature or science. ‘Information about politics’ is all information which relates to “the authoritative allocation of goods, services, and values” as Delli Carpini and Keeter defined on the basis of Easton’s definition of politics (1996: 12, Easton 1965: 50). They consciously left the category very broad because the political knowledge that is relevant in opinion formation can come from related fields like economics, history, or geography, and such knowledge should not be excluded by definition since it can help citizens come to politically relevant opinions. Because relevant information is stored in long-term memory, knowledge differs from simple information which is never cognized or related to other cognitions and never used to interpret the political world. Even though they never highlighted the organizational form of the cognitions in long-term memory, this part of the definition and their additional explanation are reminiscent of the organization dimension in Luskin’s definition. Both understandings of political sophistication are closely related and give an idea as to what aspects are relevant when analyzing a person’s level of political sophistication.

Despite its multi-dimensional character, there is strong evidence that factual knowledge measure outperforms other possible measures as the most adequate indicator of political sophistication (Luskin 1987: 890, Delli Carpini/Keeter 1993: 1203, for a detailed discussion see Zaller 1992: 333-344, for an empirical testing see Fiske et al. 1990, Price/Zaller 1993) even if this measure only captures the “quantity of stored cognition” (Luskin/Bullock 2004: 1) and neglects the dimension of organization. Factual knowledge measure is a comparatively reliable and valid measure that simply mirrors the “amount of political learning that has occurred” (Zaller 1992: 335). It measures what is actually stored in long-term memory, and it is highly robust against current newsworthy information. As it would be far more difficult to reliably and validly measure the organization of information, the level of consistency of its constraints, and the degree of abstraction-based political concepts like ideologies or left-right scales (Luskin 1987, see Converse 1964 for an example of this kind of measurement), the rather simple and straightforward indicator is commonly used. Moreover, there is no real need for a more complex measure because the dimensions of political sophistication are so closely related that it is enough to measure one dimension adequately. “By and large, the people who have lots of information are also those whose information is better organized and more largely correct, making information, knowledge, and sophistication highly collinear” (Luskin 2002a: 281-282). Moreover, this direct measure works far better than indirect measures or proxies like the level of education, media use, political interest, subjective knowledge, or political activity because these concepts are only weakly correlated with political sophistication (Fiske et al. 1990, Luskin 1990: 348-352, Karp et al. 2003: 278).

Factual knowledge of politics can be tested in different ways. A decision must be made on what kind of political knowledge should be asked and in what ques-
tion format this should be done. As regards content, no standard or uniform list of questions, which gives a comprehensive picture of relevant political knowledge, exists (Maier 2000: 144). But if the only interest is a person’s overall level of political sophistication and not variations of this level within different domains of political sophistication, the breadth of the list of questions is not of superior importance. Delli Carpini and Keeter showed that surveying knowledge of one particular political domain (e.g. either questions about the institutional design or the names of incumbents or the ideology of parties and so forth) is sufficient to determine a reasonably adequate measure of the overall political knowledge because knowledge of one domain is usually highly correlated with knowledge of other domains. Therefore, it is not necessary to include questions about all political fields of interest because the analysis of knowledge of one single political domain indicates the person’s overall level of political knowledge (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1993: 1185, 1996: 294-295, cf. as well Lupia 2006). However, Delli Carpini and Keeter found that this conclusion only holds if knowledge of one political level is concerned. Knowledge of politics on the national level is somewhat distinct from knowledge of state or local politics. Therefore, one should avoid measuring knowledge of a lower political level by using questions concerning another political level (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1993: 1185).

Transferring these findings from the American to the European context means that the level of sophistication on the EU is best measured by questions dealing with the EU level.

To distinguish between more and less sophisticated persons, it is important to include as many questions about factual knowledge as possible. According to Zaller, using only three or four questions will be too few to adequately discriminate between knowledge groups (1992: 337, FN 4), especially if the difficulty of the questions does not vary. A test of factual knowledge should therefore ensure that the questions vary in their difficulty, thus ensuring variance in the variable.

With respect to the question format, Delli Carpini and Keeter found that no specific format outperforms the others. There is no difference between open and close-ended questions; among the closed-ended questions, surprisingly, questions with only two possible answer choices work just as well as questions with more answer choices even though the latter are more susceptible to guessing (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1993, Mondak 2001). More debatable is the handling of ‘Don’t know’ answers. According to conventional treatment, ‘Don’t know’ answers are treated as wrong answers, i.e. the results of a question are transferred to one category with correct answers and to another category with incorrect or no answers (Luskin/Bullock 2004: 5). It is possible to distinguish misinformed and uninformed persons from informed persons by combining the misinformed opinions (wrong answers) and the uninformed opinions (Don’t know answers) into one category. This combination is appropriate because, as the difference in re-
response behavior (e.g. the degree of guessing or admitting no knowledge) results from the respondent’s personality and not from variance in political sophistication (Luskin/Bullock 2004). A knowledge scale including several questions then defines knowledge as the sum of the correct answers given to all questions asked. This view is challenged by Mondak who recommended that ‘Don’t know’ answers should be treated as a separate category because there is a difference between someone who is misinformed (gives a wrong answer) and someone who is uninformed (says don’t know). According to Mondak, this difference occurs because of variances in sophistication that consequently influence the information process (Mondak 1999, Mondak 2001, similar Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996: 227-238, Westle 2005: 486-488, but see Sturgis et al. 2008, good overview of measuring sophistication can be found in the Appendix in Zaller 1992).

3.3 Empirical findings on political sophistication

3.3.1 Political sophistication, heterogeneity, and the use of cognitive heuristics

First of all: What has research found about the level of political sophistication? It has found that there is ‘minimal’ political sophistication, and this point composes the core of the paradigm of minimalism introduced above (see chapter 2.2.3.3, Sniderman 1993). The first mass surveys found a low level of sophistication in the American public (Campbell et al. 1960, Converse 1964, Lazarsfeld et al. 1968). Delli Carpini and Keeter summarized the findings from these surveys from the 1940s to the 1960s: “The characterization of the citizenry provided by scholars of the period was discouraging: the average American citizen was portrayed as apathetic, uninterested in politics, unconcerned about who wins or loses presidential elections, only marginally interested in voting” (1996: 41). Since these early times, the picture has not changed; increased media use and better education have not eliminated the low level of political sophistication among the public (Sniderman 1993: 220, Bennett 1996: 228). This is a well-studied and an equally well-proven finding – also found outside the American public which represents the best studied case – and can be considered as a near-consensus among political scientists (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996: 62-104, Bennett 1996, Bennett et al. 1996, Luskin 1987: 889, 2002a). A disenchanted Converse concisely summarized this finding as follows: “The two simplest truths I know about the distribution of political information in modern electorates are that the mean is low and the variance is high” (1990: 372). In addition to confirming the low level of sophistication, this quote highlights another fact that is even more important for my
purpose: the level of sophistication varies, meaning that large differences between the citizens regarding their level of political sophistication exist.

This assumption of heterogeneity, briefly introduced at the beginning of this chapter, was empirically confirmed by early opinion surveys (Campbell et al. 1960, Converse 1964, Lazarsfeld et al. 1968). With reference to Luskin’s definition of political sophistication, these findings can be summarized concisely as follows: differences exist among citizens in terms of the size, range, and organization of the political information that they possess. The difference between the less politically sophisticated and the more politically sophisticated is that the more sophisticated have a large, wide-ranging and highly constrained belief system while the less sophisticated possess a small, low-ranging and badly organized system (Luskin 1987: 860). While such individual differences were widely known following the groundbreaking early studies, they fell into oblivion and were modeled infrequently in subsequent years. Zaller and Sniderman et al. prominently denounced this shortcoming of public opinion studies in the early 1990s. They argued in favor of the emerging ‘new look’ on public opinion and opinion formation processes, and brought back the heterogeneity assumption into discussion by demanding the inclusion of sophistication as an interaction effect when explaining public opinion or voting behavior (Sniderman et al. 1991: 20-21, Zaller 1992: 18-21, Sniderman 1993, Kinder 2006: 206-208).

What do these more recent studies reveal about the role of political sophistication in opinion formation? Abstractly speaking, less sophisticated and more sophisticated persons differ according to their opportunity, ability, and motivation to process information. Sophisticated persons are more exposed to politically relevant information, i.e. they have a better opportunity to gain or receive new information. They also have more abilities and possibilities to react to new information. Generally, it is easier for them to understand information and to evaluate whether new information is consistent with existing information. All these competences are a precondition for an individual to decide whether the new information is consistent with existing information. All these competences are a precondition for an individual to decide whether the new information is relevant, corresponds to previously acquired information, and needs to be stored. Because exposure to new or complex information is easier for the more sophisticated, their motivation to gather more news is higher (Luskin 1990, Zaller 1992: 42, Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996: 227-238, Converse 2000: 332). All in all, opportunity, ability, and motivation affect the size, range, and organization of the belief system, i.e. the three dimensions of sophistication. In this respect, these aspects are factors explaining sophistication, even if they are, in turn, affected by the level of sophistication, too. Thus, the characteristics go together as follows: sophistication widens opportunity, ability and motivation, and opportunity, ability and motivation widen sophistication. What is more interesting here are specific consequences of the different levels of sophistication: Does heterogeneity in terms of political sophistication influence opinion formation or atti-
tude structures? What differences occur because of varying levels of sophistication?

The level of political sophistication influences almost every aspect of opinion formation – the way one perceives, processes, stores, retrieves, and finally, expresses opinions (e.g. Fiske et al. 1990, Zaller 1992: 21, Krotsnick/Brannon 1993, Wyer/Ottati 1993, Lachat 2007: 56-57, authors of the schema concept: e.g. Hamill et al. 1985, Hamill/Lodge 1986, McGraw 2000, Steenbergen/Lodge 2003). Using Zaller’s terms and concepts, Delli Carpini and Keeter concluded that “[h]ighly knowledgeable citizens will be exposed to and remember more ideas and considerations than will the less aware. They also will be better able to evaluate new information in terms of its consistency with their political values and other information they hold, accepting (and remembering) considerations that are consistent with their values and rejecting those that are not” (1996: 229). They came to the conclusion that knowledge could affect the quality of attitudes in three ways: “Knowledge […] leads citizens to develop more numerous, stable, and internally consistent attitudes” (1996: 228, cf. as well Converse 1964, Zaller 1992: 52, Bartle 2005: 657). Equipped with more knowledge, more sophisticated persons outperform the less sophisticated on various steps in the opinion formation process in the political context (Luskin 1990: 332-333, Kuklinski et al. 2001). More specifically, for instance, more sophisticated persons are more interested in politics (Luskin 1990), more likely to perceive and accept the political elites’ arguments and predominant opinion (Zaller 1992), learn new information more easily, more frequently able to express an opinion (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996, Althaus 1998), or come to a decision more quickly (Fiske et al. 1990).

Predominantly important for my study is the moderating effect of political sophistication on the use of heuristics because I assume a difference between the less and the more sophisticated in their use of national attitudes as shortcuts for the evaluation of EU aspects. A literature review on the use of shortcuts in the political context generally reveals differences between knowledge groups but findings are ambiguous and inconsistent. In effect, while some empirical studies show that the less sophisticated use shortcuts to a higher extent than the more sophisticated (e.g. Sniderman et al. 1991, Lupia 1994), other studies confirm the need for a certain level of sophistication for using heuristics (Popkin 1994, for a short review see Kuklinski/Quirk 2001).

First of all, with the beginning of the ‘new look’ on information processing, political scientists began “to paint a more optimistic portrait of mass publics” (Bartels 1996: 196). They argue that ordinary citizens who are perceived to possess little political knowledge can form opinions and can make decisions irrespective of their level of political knowledge. “What marks the new look in public opinion, then, is the denial not of the classic premise of minimal levels of information and attention of mass publics, but rather of the conclusion of minimal
coherence and reasonableness in their thinking commonly drawn from it” (Sniderman 1993: 220, cf. as well Sniderman et al. 1991, Popkin 1994, Luskin 2002a). This more optimistic view results from findings that ordinary citizens rely on cognitive heuristics when making decisions in cognitively complex situations (see Chapter 2.2.3.3). Using these heuristics, it is possible for almost all citizens to form an opinion about difficult objects and to come to quite reasonable conclusions. Intuitively, one assumes that less sophisticated persons make more use of heuristics because heuristics are said to help in situations of information or knowledge shortfalls. However, existent research – mostly conducted in the context of elections and voting behavior – reveals that all voters use heuristics, even sophisticated persons rest their decisions on them. Therefore, it depends on the kind of heuristic that determines whether it is employed by the less or the more sophisticated or by both. “Just because everyone uses political heuristics does not mean that everyone uses them equally early or equally often” (Lau/Redlawsk 2006: 240). “Just as all voters are not the same, so all heuristics are not created equal. Some truly are simplifying strategies that can be employed by virtually anyone to make the task of deciding how to vote somewhat easier. But others require substantial domain-specific expertise before they are widely utilized” (Lau/Redlawsk 2006: 242, similar Lau/Redlawsk 2001, Lawrence 2003). For example, in their study about the use of heuristics in evaluating candidates in American primary and general elections, Lau and Redlawsk (2006: 241) found that the use of party cues and candidates’ appearances as heuristics is negatively correlated with sophistication, meaning that these heuristics are used by less informed persons. These are quite simple shortcuts which can be used without having much or detailed political information or previous knowledge. In contrast, ideology and interest group’s endorsements for a candidate are heuristics which are employed by well-informed persons since the use of these two heuristics requires some previous knowledge. Lawrence (2003: 37-53) shows that the use of heuristics depends on the policy context, and whether the respondents can make a connection between a certain policy and a politician responsible for this policy. For instance, only sophisticated Americans were able to connect their attitudes towards Hillary Clinton with the evaluation of complex questions about health care – an issue in which Mrs. Clinton was involved.

These examples provide evidence that the use of heuristics depends on the ‘character’ of the heuristic. If a heuristic is simple and not too demanding, it can be used by all people. However, if a heuristic is difficult and requires preconditions, a certain degree of political knowledge is necessary to apply it, and therefore, only the sophisticated use it. Transferring this conclusion to my study, I have to examine if the heuristics of interest – the attitudes towards the nation-state – are simple or difficult shortcuts. After clarifying this point, I can conclude
if the less or the more sophisticated use these shortcuts to make judgments about European aspects.

National attitudes are relatively simple and less demanding heuristics compared to other heuristics in the political context. The nation-state is the political level most citizens know best. Almost everyone has a general idea of the basic democratic institutions or the democratic and economic functioning of their country. So even if they cannot appropriately articulate their beliefs or hold incorrect ideas, many citizens are able to give statements about the political system when asked in a survey. More concretely, the national attitudes I presume to influence European attitudes are very general attitudes, namely, generalized, systemic, and democratic performance of the national system. Such general concepts require only little political knowledge. Detailed knowledge of political cause-and-effect relationships or a deep understanding of policies and their outputs are not necessary in order for citizens to give an overview of their own thoughts about the national political performances. In a nutshell: The proposed heuristics deal with the political level with which citizens are most likely familiar and, within this level, the heuristics cover rather superficial or broad concepts. Therefore, the heuristics in my model can be assumed to be quite simple and not very demanding. It is possible even for less sophisticated persons to use these heuristics when evaluating the EU. Moreover, as the less sophisticated are characterized by little political knowledge, it is likely that they need the help of heuristics because the EU is a very far, very remote, and very complicated system to them. However, as stated earlier, all persons use heuristics and therefore, it is assumed that the sophisticated use the proposed shortcuts as well because even for them the EU is remote and complex as it is such an exceptional political system. Although all citizens are assumed to use national attitudes as shortcuts, they differ in the level of usage. The shortcuts are more important for the less sophisticated and they rely more on these shortcuts than the more sophisticated.

Two further arguments concerning the relationship between heuristics and the attitudes which the heuristics help to form allow for a similar conclusion. I argue that national attitudes are possible and probable heuristics in the European context because they are easily available and related to European attitudes since both political systems are stored in one schema in long-term memory.

National attitudes are available to almost all citizens regardless of their level of sophistication. Of course, it is assumed that the more sophisticated possess more considerations about national politics in their memory, meaning they can rely on a larger reservoir of accessible considerations than the less sophisticated (cf. Zaller 1992); yet, even the less sophisticated have enough considerations about very general aspects of politics to rely on them. For all, attitudes towards the nation-state are easy to remember and easy to access, especially compared to European attitudes. National attitudes are important to most citizens; the media
and political elites provide lots of information accessible to most citizens. Differences are expected in regard to the accessibility of European attitudes. Information about European aspects is rare in the public debate. It is more likely that sophisticated persons become aware of them, because they generally have more opportunities and are better equipped and motivated to gather such information. Additionally, it is easier for them to store new and complex information because previous knowledge facilitates the understanding and organization of new information. Consequently, the knowledgeable persons are likely to possess some attitudes towards the EU, and thus, depend on heuristics to a lesser extent. The ‘nature’ of national attitudes as available and representative heuristics cannot explain the variance in the use of these shortcuts moderated by the level of knowledge. Instead, it is the assumed larger number of considerations about European aspects in the long-term memory of more sophisticated persons which makes the difference and the use of heuristics more likely among the less sophisticated.

In my model of EU support, national attitudes are specified in a way that each concrete national attitude serves as a heuristic for its equivalent specific EU attitude. This is theoretically justified because the shortcut should have something to do with the attitude for which it is a shortcut. The representative heuristic describes that citizens are likely to use known objects to evaluate rather unknown but similar objects. In addition, schema concept provides the background for understanding how this information – information about the object which is to be evaluated and information about the possible shortcut – is stored in long-term memory in order to be presumed as related to each other. Schema concept argues that more sophisticated persons have more schemata and better structured schemata. They recognize various connections between related things more easily. They have a better organized memory in terms of the internal and interschema organization (Conover/Feldman 1984: 100-101, Hamill et al. 1985: 851-853, Hamill/Lodge 1986: 71-72, Luskin 1987: 860).

At first glance, this seems to lead to the conclusion that sophisticated persons see the connection between a shortcut from the nation-state and an equivalent European aspect more easily. Technically speaking, national and European attitudes would correlate stronger among the more knowledgeable persons. However, this conclusion oversimplifies the situation. Clearly, as a number of studies have shown, national attitudes serve as heuristics but this does not mean that the connection between national and European objects is reasonable at all. Heuristics can lead to oversimplified or even wrong conclusions (Tversky/Kahneman 1974). It is perhaps not useful at all to store the national system and the European system together in one schema, entitled ‘political systems’. Obviously, the two levels of the multi-level European system are related to each other, but there can be huge differences between the performance and other aspects of the two.
systems which make it more reasonable to store the two political levels in connected but different schemata. A large, wide-ranging, and well-organized long-term memory can include information and considerations about the national and European level; this information can be stored in two distinct schemata but there are various interschematic connections between the two which would make sense when looking at the political reality. For example, such a memory organization should allow for the influence of national economic policy on European economic policy or for the national executive to serve on the Council of the European Union. In contrast, a small, low-ranging, and badly organized memory may lack much information about the remote and complex European system; therefore, if EU information is stored, it can be entangled with other political information from the national context in such a way that it becomes impossible to distinguish between the two systems. If this entanglement concerns many or all aspects, it will generate a picture of the multi-level system that exaggerates reality and makes the two systems seem to be closer connected than they actually are. This argument is supported by Hamill, Lodge, and Blake who found that more knowledgeable voters use more sophisticated and varied schemata than the less knowledgeable – but even the latter had some schemata they could rely on (1985, cf. as well Lawrence 2003: 14). The consequence of these considerations is that the assumed simple attitude structures of the less sophisticated enable them to form opinions about the EU but that these opinions do not necessarily result from reasonable and well-functioning shortcuts. However, they use the available heuristics without question. The more knowledgeable recognize that the two political systems are different and that some attitudes towards the nation-state do not work properly as heuristics; hence, they would not apply them as intensively as less knowledgeable persons.

Altogether, the use of national attitudes as shortcuts helps less sophisticated persons to make judgments about European objects. But this does not mean that the differences between knowledge groups diminish or that less sophisticated individuals perform just like fully-informed ones. Several empirical studies have shown that heuristic-based opinion formation facilitates the expression of opinions; however, opinion formation based on heuristics does not necessarily lead to correct opinions, equivalent to opinions formed under conditions of full information. Sophisticated persons still outperform their less sophisticated counterparts but the latter are able to come to quite reasonable evaluations (Bartels 1996, Kuklinski et al. 2001, Lau/Redlawsk 2001, for an even more critical view see Tversky/Kahneman 1974, for a more optimistic view see Popkin 1994). Since I am not interested in whether heuristics make less sophisticated persons behave like the fully-informed, I will not discuss further the advantages or disadvantages of heuristic thinking. Rather, I want to study the differences between individuals regarding the level of EU knowledge, which would presumably lead
to different attitude structures underlying EU support and to a different use of
cognitive heuristics. Before it is possible to specify hypotheses on the effects of
political sophistication on my model of EU support, I have to describe existing
empirical findings on the level of EU knowledge and its influence on EU atti-
tudes. In referring to these findings in combination with the above stated influ-
ence of sophistication on the use of heuristics, reasonable hypotheses can be de-
veloped.

3.3.2 Political knowledge of the European Union

This chapter highlights main findings on political knowledge of the EU. As cur-
cent research does not provide us with much information about EU knowledge in
the CEE context, I present general findings from the Western context which I
transfer to my model to formulate hypotheses on political sophistication. In this
chapter, I examine the literature about EU knowledge with an eye towards four
aspects, which are relevant to understanding the role that political sophistication
plays in my theoretical assumptions about EU support and the underlying atti-
du[...]

This study deals with the political sophistication concerning the EU in CEE
countries before and after EU accession. Before joining the EU, European poli-
tics was a part of the foreign policy domain so a short look at the role of political
sophistication in this context is promising. Early research on public opinion
about foreign policy in the USA confirmed a low level of knowledge of foreign
policy. Three aspects of public opinion about foreign policy were summarized in
what Holsti called the ‘Almond-Lippmann Consensus’: “(1) it is volatile and this
provides inadequate foundations for stable and effective foreign policies, (2) it
lacks coherence or structure, but (3) in the final analysis, it has little if any im-
 pact on foreign policy” (Holsti 1992: 439). Even if some of these findings are
questioned (cf. e.g. Shapiro/Page 1988, Holsti 1992), the lack of adequate and
 comprehensive knowledge of foreign policy has been consistently confirmed in
more recent studies (Bennett 1996, Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996, Popkin/Dimock
2000). Generally, the low level of political sophistication has been best examined
for the American public, but these results are generalized and empirically con-
 firmed in different contexts as well (e.g. Bennett et al. 1996, Lawrence 2003).
The same can be said for knowledge of the EU. Even in member states where European policy is more than just foreign policy, the level of EU knowledge remains low. A comparison with knowledge of the national political system helps to confirm this claim. Eurobarometer 39 from spring 1993 includes four comparable questions about each system surveyed in the then 12 member states and Norway. It asked for the national capital (90 percent correct answers) and the capital of the EU institutions (71 percent), the head of the national government (87 percent) and the Commission president (42 percent), the legislative authority of the nation-state (42 percent) and the EU (19 percent), and the members of the national government (42 percent) and the European Commission (7 percent) (Hobolt 2007: Table 1 on page 152). Hobolt (2007) as well as Sinnott (1997) used these data to examine the level of EU knowledge. Both drew the same conclusion: the difference between the knowledge of each political level is striking and the ignorance of European issues is far greater than of national issues. In addition, Niedermayer and Sinnott’s analysis of knowledge of the EP in the EU-12 in the 1980s and early 1990s, using knowledge questions from various Eurobarometer data sets, showed “that only something between one-quarter and one-third of the citizens of Europe have even the most minimal grasp of the role of the European Parliament” (1995b: 291). This finding is in line with my argument. As outlined in the chapter on the nature of the EU, the EU is a remote, distant, and complex system. Ordinary citizens are generally not motivated to collect much information about a system for which they do not care and, even less so, if information about this system is demanding and difficult to understand. Moreover, Niedermayer and Sinnott found an interesting pattern in the answers of respondents on questions about the powers of the EP. Most respondents exaggerated the EP’s power. The authors presumed that this systematic error occurred because citizens simply projected the powers of the national parliaments to the EP, i.e. they thought that the EP – because it was a parliament – had similar powers as national parliaments. This finding contributes to my assumption that ordinary citizens merely transfer their attitudes and perceptions of national institutions to the European institutions in order to bridge their knowledge gap and to be able to answer survey questions on the EU.

The general level of political sophistication concerning the EU is low but, as suggested by the heterogeneity assumption, citizens differ in their level of knowledge. This difference is said to be responsible for different European attitudes including the level of EU support, the variable that interests me. First of all, bivariate findings show that more sophisticated persons are more likely to form an opinion about European aspects. Sinnott describes that less sophisticated persons go for ‘Don’t know’ answers to a higher extent than the more sophisticated and portrays the less sophisticated as “indecisive” or “ambivalent” regarding their attitudes towards the EU (Sinnott 1997: 10, 18). This is in accordance
with findings from other political contexts (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1996: 230-231, Althaus 1998: 546). According to Zaller, considerations used for evaluating a political object are chosen from information stored in memory (1992: 49). Since more sophisticated persons possess a larger range of accessible considerations, it is more likely that they have stored and can easily retrieve a consideration suitable to form an opinion about a given survey question. Less sophisticated persons, who do not possess information relevant to answer the question, are not able to form an opinion on the spot, and must admit that they do not have an opinion.

Furthermore, bivariate findings reveal that a higher level of sophistication is associated with a higher level of EU support. For instance, Sinnott (1997) used eight knowledge questions dealing with European institutions from Eurobarometer 39 from 1993 to form a knowledge index. This index ranges from 0 to 29 points because he weighted the questions according to their difficulty and to the number of possible answers. The higher the number of points a person gets, the higher his level of knowledge. Sinnott distinguished between five knowledge groups and showed that support for the EU increased accordingly from the group with the least knowledge to the group with the most knowledge. For example, among the least knowledgeable group, only 47 percent think that the EU is a good thing, compared to 80 percent in the highest knowledge group. The same picture emerges with regard to other EU attitudes: 39 percent of the least knowledgeable think that their country has benefited from the EU, while 78 percent of the most knowledgeable have this view. Among the least knowledgeable, only 22 percent would feel very sorry if the EU were dissolved, compared to 67 percent among the highly knowledgeable (Sinnott 1997: Table 3).

As early as the 1970s, Inglehart provided a theoretical reason for why sophisticated individuals supported the EU to a higher extent than the less sophisticated. For knowledgeable persons, the European system is more familiar and less threatening. But this association is possible only if there is favorable coverage of Europe in the media, and the main political actors support European integration as well. In such a cosmopolitan Europe-friendly environment, individuals who are able to retrieve more information see the system positively and support it because they have received predominantly positive messages about Europe (Inglehart 1970). This reasoning has been borrowed and empirically confirmed by other researches (e.g. Janssen 1991, Gabel 1998b, McLaren 2002, similar Wessels 1995a). Moreover, this argument is supported by general cognitive psychological findings, which state that individuals who are exposed to many mainstream political messages and able to process such messages are more likely to adopt the dominant view in a country (Zaller 1992: 98-100).

Beyond bivariate correlations, the influence of knowledge on EU support has been examined in multivariate analyses. If political sophistication is modeled as an independent variable assumed to directly affect either support for the EU
(Gabel 1998b, Kaplan 2001, Wessels 2007), parts of the EU like the EMU (Hayo 1999, Gabel/Hix 2005), fearlessness of European integration (Kaplan 2001), or European identity (Wessels 2007), rather modest positive relations have been found. However, the studies show that the effect is positive and statistically significant. Therefore, political sophistication leads to higher support for the EU or, to cite Wessels who frames the finding the other way around, “Eurosceptics […] tend to be considerably less informed” (Wessels 2007: 301).

Another study that does not deal with attitudes towards the EU, but with the influence of national attitudes on attitudes towards foreign policy, points in a similar direction. It is thus worth describing in more detail to get a better understanding of the role of heuristics in foreign affairs and the influence of knowledge. Popkin and Dimock used surveys conducted in the USA in 1992 and 1994 to show that American citizens “who neither understand nor trust their own government and who distrust their fellow citizens are also suspicious of foreigners, apprehensive about international trade, and isolationists” (Popkin/Dimock 2000: 215). In contrast, citizens who know that political institutions guarantee national sovereignty and regulate exchanges with other countries are supportive of free trade, immigration and international involvement. If one generalizes these findings, all citizens use attitudes towards the nation-state to evaluate foreign policy, especially attitudes towards national institutions (in my model: national generalized performance) and fellow citizens (in my model: national identity). The difference is that the more sophisticated are more supportive of complex foreign policy, whereas the less sophisticated are more cautious because it is more difficult for them to understand complex relations in the political world. When transferring these findings to EU analyses, we can assume that sophisticated persons are more likely to support the EU because they understand it better so they can be less fearful or skeptical than the less sophisticated. This is in accordance with the empirical results presented above.

Political sophistication unfolds its ‘real’ power when it is modeled as an interaction effect or a moderator variable. In her study about voting behavior in EU referendums, Hobolt demonstrated that political sophistication conditions the way citizens make decisions (Hobolt 2005). Concretely, she examined whether the level of political sophistication moderates the influence of attitudes towards European integration on voting behavior in eight referendums on European issues in Denmark, Norway, and Ireland between 1972 and 2002. She also included partisanship and satisfaction with the national government as further independent variables. The results reveal that attitudes towards European integration are more influential, the higher the level of sophistication. This finding, drawn from a cross-temporal and cross-national comparison, is a strong indication for the validity of the heterogeneity assumption in the European context.
For my analyses, another study is of great importance. Karp et al. (2003) were interested in demonstrating whether the level of political sophistication affects the relationship between attitudes towards the nation-state and attitudes towards the EU. Using the terminology of my study, this means that they had wanted to determine whether national attitudes serve as shortcuts for the evaluation of EU aspects and whether the use of shortcuts varies with different levels of political sophistication. They used a Eurobarometer data set from the fall 1999 which included four knowledge questions. Respondents were asked to identify some public figures: the president of the European Commission and the commissioner appointed by the national government, as well as the national minister of finance and minister of foreign affairs. Relying on the answers to these knowledge questions, Karp et al. divided their sample into a low knowledge group and a high knowledge group. The low knowledge group consisted of persons who could not identify any of the political actors and the high knowledge group consisted of persons knowing all actors. Since the authors were interested in the satisfaction with the EU’s democracy, they first analyzed the bivariate correlations between satisfaction with the national and the European democracy on the individual level separately for each knowledge group. The correlation coefficients (0.68 for the low knowledge group and 0.50 for the high knowledge group) indicate that highly sophisticated individuals can better distinguish between the national and the European level (Karp et al. 2003: 282, 285). This means in turn that the less sophisticated rely more heavily on shortcuts. In addition, Karp et al. assumed a moderating effect of political knowledge when explaining satisfaction with the EU in a multivariate analysis. They tested the interaction by splitting the sample in the two groups as it was explained above. A comparison of the two separate multivariate regressions (one for each group) reveals differences in the strength of various factors explaining satisfaction with the EU. The model for the low knowledge group shows that EU satisfaction is first and foremost explained by satisfaction with the democracy in the nation-state. In contrast, highly sophisticated individuals use attitudes towards EU institutions to a larger extent to evaluate satisfaction with the EU. However, satisfaction with the national democracy has an impact in this model as well. Altogether, the comparison of knowledge groups shows “that evaluations of national democratic performance are used as a proxy in evaluating EU democracy but that the effect is conditioned by levels of political knowledge” (Karp et al. 2003: 287). This is in accordance with heuristic theory elaborated in my study, namely that citizens use simple and available shortcuts to evaluate European aspects, and that they use such shortcuts especially if they have no or little knowledge of the aspect they are asked to evaluate.

Hence, there is strong evidence that political sophistication conditions information processing concerning EU attitudes. The role of sophistication as a moderator that changes the strength of the impact of various independent variables on
a bundle of dependent variables measuring EU attitudes is confirmed cross-nationally and cross-temporally. Therefore, the heterogeneity assumption, which is mostly discussed with reference to voting behavior in the national context (and mainly for the American public), can be transferred to the European context. The need to control for such an effect is increased if heuristics play a role in the model – as Karp et al. showed – because a strong moderator effect on the relation between national attitudes and EU attitudes is very likely.

Besides moderating the relevance of independent variables in explaining EU support or other EU related dependent variables, the level of knowledge more specifically affects the attitude structure underlying EU attitudes. Sinnott tested the impact of knowledge on the individuals’ EU attitude structure in his article, “Knowledge And The Position Of Attitudes To A European Foreign Policy On The Real-To-Random Continuum” (2000). As in his 1997 study, Sinnott used eight knowledge questions dealing with EU institutions from Eurobarometer 39 from 1993 to create a knowledge index that enabled him to differentiate between five groups varying in their level of knowledge. Then he analyzed the attitude structures towards four European policies (economic policy, CFSP, immigration/asylum, drugs/crime) across these five knowledge groups using factor analyses. He measured each policy with multiple indicators and presumed that the highly knowledgeable were able to distinguish between the different policies; technically speaking, he assumed that their attitude structure consisted of four factors and each factor represented one of the four policies. He confirmed that the group with the highest level of knowledge possessed the theoretically assumed attitude structure. Almost all items loaded on their assumed factor, which indicated that the highly knowledgeable could distinguish between different EU policies. He also showed that the less knowledge a group had, the less consistent its attitude structure was (Sinnott 2000). All in all, Sinnott’s study has shown that the level of knowledge influences the respondents’ attitudes structure in the EU context.

3.4 Hypotheses

After describing the theoretical assumptions underlying the presumed moderating effect of political sophistication in my model, as well as presenting important empirical results on the knowledge of the EU, I will summarize my assumptions by specifying hypotheses that will be tested. These hypotheses concern the effect of citizens’ level of knowledge on generalized support for the EU and the corresponding underlying attitude structure in the period around the accession.

The definition of political sophistication stresses that this variable is about the size and range of political considerations stored in a belief system. Therefore,
differences between the less and the more sophisticated are expected according to the size and range of information about the EU that they possess. These differences lead to differences in expressed opinions on the EU. If a person possesses more considerations about the EU, he can more easily form an opinion about EU aspects and express this opinion when asked. In contrast, a person who possesses only little information may not be able to form an opinion on the spot. Therefore, I assume that the proportion of no answers or 'Don’t know’ answers to questions measuring generalized EU support is higher among the less sophisticated and lower among the more sophisticated. The differences should hold for the whole period around the accession. Even at the beginning of the interaction between the future member states and the EU, the sophisticated are more likely to form attitudes. They may not have more experience with European issues but they are better equipped in processing new, complex, and rather limited information in an environment of little experience.

Hypothesis 12: During the whole period around the accession, more persons among the sophisticated are able to indicate whether they support the EU in general or not.

The ability to express an opinion about generalized support for the EU is a result of the greater opportunity, ability, and motivation to retrieve EU information from the mass media and the political elites via the mass media. Citizens who have the facility to follow discussions on the EU, even if there is little media coverage, and who are able to process new information are generally supportive of dominant values and attitudes in a political community. During the period around the accession, the opinions of a majority of the leading political actors towards the EU were clearly positive. In all candidate countries in CEE, an environment supportive of EU membership is assumed. This leads to the hypothesis that the more sophisticated adopt this view to a greater extent than the less sophisticated, which leads to differences in their level of generalized support for the EU during the period around the accession.

Hypothesis 13: The level of generalized support for the EU is higher among the sophisticated.

Beyond differences in size and range of available attitudes, less and more sophisticated persons differ in the organization of their memories. This difference affects the use of heuristics when evaluating remote and complex objects. Transferred to my model of EU support, this means that national attitudes serving as shortcuts hold a different level of importance for the less sophisticated and the more sophisticated. As national attitudes are simple and less demanding heuristics, it is likely that everyone is able to use them. However, the less sophisticated need them more urgently to form attitudes towards the EU because they store little independent, EU-relevant information in their memory. Furthermore, their in-
formation about national and equivalent European aspects – if any at all – is likely to be organized in one schema and therefore likely to be activated together. In contrast, memories of the more sophisticated are organized differently: information about the national and the European system is only loosely linked in their memories. That is why I assume that persons with a low level of sophistication use national attitudes as shortcuts to a higher extent than more sophisticated persons. In my model, generalized, systemic, and democratic performance of the nation-state are shortcuts for the generalized, systemic, and democratic performance of the EU, respectively. I assume that sophistication affects the process of generating these cognitive-evaluative attitudes because these attitudes are based on knowledge of the object to be evaluated and on more reasonable and cognitive considerations.

This leads to one main hypothesis and two subordinated hypotheses concerning the moderating effect of political sophistication on the influence of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in the model of generalized support for the EU in CEE.

**Hypothesis 14:** National attitudes play a more important role among the less sophisticated citizens, i.e. citizens knowing little about the EU use cognitive heuristics – namely the attitudes towards the nation-state – to evaluate the EU to a higher extent than more sophisticated citizens.

14a: Performances of the nation-state have a stronger influence on their equivalent specific EU attitudes among the less sophisticated.

14b: Performances of the nation-state have a stronger indirect influence on generalized support for the EU among the less sophisticated.

In contrast, the relation between national identity, European identity, and EU support, whereby the identities are affective-evaluative attitudes, are guided by gut feelings. Their relation may not be conditioned by the level of political sophistication because gut feelings do not rely on correct available facts about an object but on emotions and spontaneous feelings. These assumptions lead to the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 15:** There are no differences between the knowledge groups concerning the influence of national identity on European identity and on generalized support for the EU.

As I study the attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE during the period around the accession, I am also interested in whether the moderating effect of political sophistication changes in the course of time. Because I do not expect a moderating effect of political sophistication on the influence of national identity on European identity and EU support, I will concentrate on the relationships between national performances, EU performances and EU support.
The main assumption is that the citizens from CEE gain more and more experience with the EU, and become better informed about and more familiar with that system in the course of time. This very general assumption drives my hypotheses concerning the conditioning effect of sophistication over time. Firstly, I assume that the relevance of the heuristics changes for both knowledge groups in the course of time as it is possible for all citizens to gain experience with the EU and to become increasingly informed about and aware of different aspects of European integration. After the accession, the EU became a part of the daily life of all CEE citizens which should lead to an increase in more independent attitudes towards the EU – even if shortcuts are still needed. As all citizens gain more experience with the remote and complex system, it is assumed that a parallel decrease of the influence of attitudes towards the national performances occurs in both knowledge groups.

**Hypothesis 16**: The influence of the performances of the nation-state on specific EU attitudes and on generalized support for the EU decreases in both knowledge groups over time.

The assumption of a parallel development of the attitude structure of less and more sophisticated persons over time implies that the less sophisticated cannot close the gap with the more sophisticated. All citizens in CEE can learn more and more about the EU but sophisticated persons can learn more easily. Sophisticated persons are better equipped to understand new information than persons without much information. Preexisting EU knowledge facilitates retrieving, processing, and storing of new EU information that is offered by the political elites and the media in the period around the accession. Therefore, the differences in the use of heuristics between the knowledge groups continue to exist in the course of time. Even at the time when Central and Eastern European countries first began to interact and cooperate with the EU, the more sophisticated already relied less on heuristics, and this pattern continued to prevail after the accession.

**Hypothesis 17**: The differences between the two knowledge groups exist during the whole period around the accession.

17a: Performances of the nation-state have a stronger influence on their equivalent specific EU attitudes among the less sophisticated during the whole period around the accession.

17b: Performances of the nation-state have a stronger indirect influence on generalized support for the EU among the less sophisticated during the whole period around the accession.
Empirical testing of the model of generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the accession

4.1 Carrying out the analysis

In the following chapters, the proposed model is tested empirically. The three research questions and the related hypotheses serve as guidelines. Before the actual empirical analyses can start, I must deal with some preliminary remarks on the data, the research design, the handling of missing values, and the used method, namely structural equation modeling, as well as the operationalization of the dependent and independent variables in my model. These remarks are necessary to point out the appropriate methodological settings for answering the research questions. The actual analyses start with descriptive findings on the dependent variable of EU support to give some information about its level and development in the period under investigation. To answer the first research question on the determinants of EU support and the underlying attitude structure, I conduct a detailed analysis of the situation in 2007, the last data point at hand. This allows me to examine whether the proposed model can capture the underlying structure of EU support in CEE. In answering the first question, three steps are undertaken: An explorative factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis are calculated to ascertain whether the proposed model fits the data. After these important preparatory works, I test the final model using SEM. Subsequently, these results for 2007 are compared with data from previous points in time to answer the second research question on the cross-temporal changes of the attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE in the period around the accession. The last part of the empirical analysis deals with the testing of the conditioning effect of political sophistication on the attitude structure. Firstly, the operationalization of political sophistication as factual knowledge of the EU is described. Then, the effects of political sophistication on EU attitudes are explained. The examination mirrors the preceding analysis: after describing the level and the development of EU support for different levels of knowledge, the conditioning effect of sophistication is tested in detail for 2007. Lastly, this effect is examined at other points in time to analyze its influence cross-temporally.
When searching for appropriate data to test the theoretical model empirically and to answer the research questions, when preparing the data set for the analyses and, generally, when making decisions prior to estimating the final models, compromises must be found. There is no straightforward and easy way to do this, and each step must be well-considered because it may have implications for the following steps. This chapter reveals the decisions and compromises made concerning data, research design, and the treating of missing values.

The scope of this study includes the empirical testing of the EU support model in CEE before and after the accession. Hence, the model shall be tested, firstly, for the countries that joined the EU on May, the 1st 2004 and, secondly, at various points in time around this date; these two objectives make great demands on the data. There must be data for all eight countries collected during the same periods of time. Furthermore, these data sets must include indicators for EU support and all determinants theoretically deduced in previous chapters.

For this purpose, comparative individual data sets repeated in several waves are the best option.\(^45\) It must be noted, however, that even when using comparative data sets identical indicators, i.e. identical questions asked in every country, cannot guarantee equivalence. Yet, as the country set in my study is homogenous insofar as it only includes countries with a similar contemporary history and political and economic background, problems of equivalence are unlikely; rather, indicators are assumed to be equivalent across countries. Furthermore, comparative data sets are generated precisely for purposes like mine; thus, questions of equivalence are generally addressed in the process of developing such a survey, rather than while analyzing the data. In other words, as a secondary researcher, one has to trust that the validity and reliability of the indicators are tested and improved by the primary researchers in an ongoing process (Arzheimer 2008: 139, on the problem of equivalence see Van Deth 1998).

The comparative data sets most suitable for testing my hypotheses and answering my research questions are several data sets from the Eurobarometer or, more specifically, from the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer (CCEB) and the Standard Eurobarometer (EB).\(^46\) The CCEB is an internationally comparative survey conducted from 2001 until 2004 on an irregular basis, but at least once a year. It includes 13 countries, all of which were considered as applicant or can-

\(^{45}\) My research questions have an aggregate focus by aiming to analyze support in the Central and Eastern European region, the development of support over time, and the differences between given knowledge groups. I would like to point out that I am not interested in individual attitude changes over time. Therefore, I am not relying on panel data.

\(^{46}\) For more information on the CCEB and EB see Gesis (2009b, 2009c).
didate countries in 2001 (Malta, Cyprus, Turkey, and 10 post-communist countries). All the interested countries were constantly surveyed in the CCEB. Each survey includes representative national samples of an almost identical sample size ($N \approx 1000$). The advantage of these surveys is that they include so-called trend questions, which are part of the EB surveys as well.\footnote{This was not the case in the former Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, conducted between 1990 and 1997, which is why it cannot be used in this study. For further information see Gesis (2009d).} Therefore, it is possible to combine CCEB and EB studies. The CCEB studies are used to describe and analyze the situation in CEE before the accession; after enlargement, I use EB data.

For descriptive purposes, mainly for describing the level and development of support for the EU, I rely on five CCEB data sets that include the indicators measuring my dependent variable. To analyze the attitude structure and support for the EU before the eastward enlargement, I can only use one survey conducted in October 2003. It is the only CCEB data set that includes all the indicators that I need; moreover, these indicators in the CCEB are worded similarly to their EB counterparts. Therefore, the period of time that this study covers starts in fall 2003, more than half a year before eastward enlargement.

After the accession to the EU, the new member states were included in the Standard Eurobarometer which surveys national samples in all member states. The sample size for each post-communist country remains at about 1000. The EB is conducted on a biannual basis; however, the different surveys do not include an identical variable set every time. Some trend questions are always asked, while others are only a part of every other study. My analyses based on the EB start with the first survey covering the EU-25 in fall 2004. The last point in time that I am able to incorporate into my study is the EB from fall 2007. This means that while, in principle, there are seven surveys available, only four include the relevant indicators. To ensure a relatively similar period of time between the points in time analyzed, I skip one suitable data set from spring 2005, which would report the situation only half a year after the first EB survey used here. This leaves me with the data set from fall 2004, as mentioned above, and data sets from spring 2006 and fall 2007, meaning that between each measurement points there is a period of one and a half year. Together with the data set from the CCEB, which was conducted one year before the first used EB data set, I can cover the period between fall 2003 and fall 2007 on an almost regular basis.

These four data sets allow for a simultaneous test of the model of EU support including all determinants and the dependent variables at all measurement points. Furthermore, I can ensure that all determinants are measured by the same indica-
tors at all measurement points. This secures a more valid temporal comparison even if latent constructs and not manifest indicators are compared as this study does. Because CCEB and EB are designed to measure attitudes towards the EU, its institutional design, politics, and policies relevant for Europe, most questions are concerned with the EU in one way or another. The measurement of support for the EU and the EU-specific determinants in the model is relatively unproblematic. Because of the focus of the data sets, indicators measuring attitudes towards the nation-state are infrequent. Nevertheless, the surveys include such indicators, making them appropriate for my purpose.

Besides the technical reasons for selecting data sets, the period covered and the points in time used can be substantially justified. For the EU, support for its regime is only relevant if this support has implications for the future of this system. This is the case, for example, if the people in various countries can influence the EU through elections to the EP or through referendums on European issues. This has been given to the countries in the Central and Eastern European region since 2003. During that year, each country held a referendum on EU membership. For the first time in history, the opinion of the people in CEE was relevant for the future of the EU. Henceforth, and especially after becoming members of the EU, the Central and Eastern Europeans could participate in the EU, namely by voting for the EP in 2004 and 2009. Because my model is especially designed for new member states, the period that can be analyzed especially well with this model is the period shortly after the accession, where experience within the EU is nascent. The period considered is extended to three years after the accession because the model should be tested during ‘normal’ times as well; ‘normal’ times means that EU membership has become a given thing and daily life within the EU has replaced the application and enlargement period. With this design, it is possible to compare the model’s validity and explanatory power during different stages of the relation between the EU and the nation-states. In principal, the validity and explanatory power of the model is given, independent of particular phases of the integration process. Besides the validity of the whole model, this study focuses on the relative relevance of single determinants of support, assuming that the explanatory power of certain variables varies as a function of the duration of membership in the EU. To test hypotheses on temporal effects in view of the relative relevance of single determinants, a meaningful choice of measurement points is obligatory. To conclude, the used data sets from the CCEB and EB between 2003 and 2007 allow for a valid and reliable measurement of the theoretical model for each measurement point and for a meaningful cross-temporal comparison, including the test of specific hypotheses outlined in chapters 2.3 and 3.4.
As has been stated above, each CCEB and EB data set includes approximately 1000 respondents from each country. Since the countries are not equal in population size but I am interested in pooled analyses, the question about weighting must be discussed.

According to the literature, two types of weighting of survey data exist: design weights and post-stratification weights. Design weights adjust for unequal probabilities in the selection of respondents, which can and should be used without hesitation if they are available. Unfortunately, this kind of weighting is not available for CCEB and EB data. Therefore, the data must be treated like a simple random sample in which all cases in a country have the same selection probability (Arzheimer 2008: 230).

Regarding post-stratification weights, there is an ongoing discussion about the sense or nonsense of its use. The aim of post-stratification weights is to adjust the distribution of selected variables in the sample (e.g. age, gender) according to their distribution in a given universe. The primary researchers of the CCEB and EB surveys deliver two different post-stratification weights. The first one is to adjust for differences between the sample and the universe within each single country by using universe descriptions of gender, age, region, settlement size, household size, and education level (in CCEB) or gender, age, region, and size of locality (in EB) in an iterative process (Gesis 2008a, 2009e). A theoretical argument against the use of such post-stratification weights is that it is only helpful if the variables used for the adjustment are responsible for the loss of respondents, which has been shown to be highly unlikely (Rothe 1994: 77, Arzheimer 2008: 231). Furthermore, Rothe showed empirically by using ALLBUS data that weighting can lead to more biased estimates than without weighting (Rothe 1994). Moreover, weighting can produce complications when applying complex multivariate statistics (Kish 1990: 126-127, Arzheimer 2008: 231). These arguments lead me to the conclusion that I should not rely on this kind of weighting in my study (for further discussions about weighting see articles in Gabler et al. 1994).

The second kind of post-stratification weights deals with the following issue. In each CCEB and EB data set all countries are represented by an identical sample size of approximately 1000 respondents even if countries’ differ widely in

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48 In the smallest EU member states, Luxemburg, Malta, and the Republic of Cyprus, only approximately 500 people are surveyed, but even in the smallest post-communist countries, Estonia, Slovenia, and Latvia, around 1000 interviews are realized. For more information see Gesis (2009f).
49 Since Eurobarometer 32 (Fall 1989), all Eurobarometer are based on multi-stage, random sampling. For more information see Gesis (2008b).
50 Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften (ALLBUS). For further information see Gesis (2008c).
their actual population sizes. If one analyzes more than one country, the country with the smaller population would be overrepresented in such a case. The weights should correct for that and ensure that each country is represented proportionally according to its population size. Information about the countries’ populations is found in national statistics (CCEB) and in the Regional Yearbooks from Eurostat (EB) (Gesis 2008a, 2009e). At first glance, this kind of weighting would be appropriate for my case because I want to use pooled data in my analyses to come to conclusions that apply to the interested region. In my case, there are eight countries of different population sizes (ranging from approximately 1.3 million Estonians to approximately 38 million Poles (see Table 1); in an analysis without this particular weighting, inhabitants of smaller states, like Estonia, Slovenia, and Latvia will be overrepresented while Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians will be underrepresented. However, a specific problem occurs in my sample of countries, which argues against this weighting. The population of Poland is much bigger than all the other countries, e.g. the second largest country according to population size, the Czech Republic, has only about one fourth of the Polish population. All other countries, except for Hungary, consist of less than six million people. The share of Polish people among the Central and Eastern Europeans is over 50 percent. Hence, it follows that if I used population size weighting, half of the pooled Central and Eastern European sample would consist of Poles. More to the point, if such weighting is used, I would be studying the Polish case rather than the Central and Eastern European region. Even if this mirrors the reality between the populations, the dominance of the Polish population would yield biased results in a study about attitudes of Central and Eastern Europeans because the attitudes of the Poles would outshine the others’ attitudes. Furthermore, the attitudes of Estonians, Latvians, and Slovenians would almost completely be neglected because they make up only 2 or 3 percent of the CEE population, respectively.

Table 1: Population in Central and Eastern European countries, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CZE</th>
<th>EST</th>
<th>HUN</th>
<th>LVA</th>
<th>LTU</th>
<th>POL</th>
<th>SVK</th>
<th>SVN</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population in Mio.</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share in population of CEE in %</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


51 The population of each country did not change significantly in the years covered in this study. Therefore, only the statistics for 2007 are shown.
This problem is boosted in my case because my model includes attitudes towards the nation-state, meaning that the national context matters. Though I assume that the direction and strength of relationships in the model are similar in all eight countries, if there happens to be a peculiarity within the Polish case – for instance, sincere struggles in domestic politics or domestic economic problems – this would totally distort my results. Or to create a worst case scenario: If Poland is a kind of outlier on a moderate level, it would distort the results in the Polish direction even if the populations in all other countries behave in the same way.

Because the population sizes in the countries surveyed here comprise such a huge range, only an equal treatment of all countries would allow me to show that the model is suitable for the region. If my sample consists of about 1000 respondents from each country – no country dominates, no country is discriminated – all respondent’s answers count equally. Though I am not interested in testing the model in every single country, I want to make sure that the research design allows for conclusions for all new member states together. With regards to this kind of post-stratification weighting, I have to decide whether I want a sample in which each country is represented proportionally according to its population size or a sample where the de facto dominance of Poland is eliminated and smaller countries have a considerable influence. It is not possible to get a completely satisfying solution to this problem and I have to pick a side. In my opinion, the problems concerning the size of Poland outweigh the lack of proportionality; therefore, I will not employ the population size weighting.

In sum, because of the problems concerning weights when using complex measurement models and the huge differences in population sizes within my country set, I will not apply any kind of weighting procedure. Moreover, there is a practical reason for discarding the use of weights. The method that I prefer for calculating structural equation models requires raw data, meaning that it cannot use prepared correlation and covariance matrices, like some other SEM estimation methods, or weights. There would be a trade-off between the use of weights and the methods available for SEM. The use of weights would prevent me from using the most appropriate method, creating more problems in terms of the validity and robustness of my results than omitting weights altogether. Seeing that weighting would lead to more problems than advantages, I decided against weighting in my study.

Thinking about practical and technical features of this study leads to another decision that must be made before the empirical analyses of this work can be accomplished. One needs to decide how to handle missing values. This problem is inherent in every study using empirical data but constitutes a central problem in this study for two reasons. Firstly, missing values occur more frequently in survey data from CEE than in data from established democracies (Ehin 2001: 33). The number of cases with at least one missing value in one of the variables in-
cluded in my model exceeds the threshold up to which ignoring the missing values by just deleting these cases (listwise deletion) is appropriate. According to Schafer, this threshold is about 5 percent (Schafer 1997: 1). To illustrate: In the data set from spring 2006, I would lose 58 percent of my cases if listwise deletion is used because 4743 cases out of a total of 8238 cases had at least one missing value and would have to be excluded. The second problem occurs when I compare groups of individuals, namely knowledge groups, and the distribution of missing values is unequal in both groups. Ignoring missing values by deleting all cases with at least one missing value would lead to a shift in the relative proportion of the different knowledge groups in the sample because a higher proportion of less sophisticated respondents would be excluded. For example, in the data set from spring 2006 (N=8238), 47.7 percent fall into the less sophisticated group while 52.3 percent of respondents are considered more sophisticated persons. Listwise deletion would notably change this relation, leaving the reduced sample (N=3495) with only 40.5 percent less sophisticated but 59.5 percent more sophisticated persons.

For these reasons, listwise deletion is not an option and missing values must be dealt with in a different manner. Furthermore, I want to add that listwise deletion does not only pose considerable problems for this study, but this way of handling missing values is suboptimal in other studies as well. It leads to inefficient estimates and can produce biased estimates if the cases are not missing randomly (Allison 2002: 6-8, Weins 2006: 206-207). Nevertheless, despite the fact that authors often do not say anything about their handling of missing values, listwise deletion seems to be the most common method in important empirical studies that I have referenced in the theoretical part of my work, which means that the results should be critically reviewed.

Other methods of handling missing values depend on the kind of data that is missing. Rubin (1976, 1987) classified and defined three missing data mechanisms. Data ‘missing completely at random’ (MCAR) is where the missing values are independent from the value of the missing variable and the observed values of other variables in the data. In this case, missing values are completely random, which means that the set of cases that contain no missing values can be treated like a random sample of the large sample including cases with missing data (Allison 2002: 3-4, Weins 2006: 208). If the data is ‘missing at random’ (MAR), the missing values are independent from the value of the missing variable but dependent on the observed values of other variables, meaning that the observed values contain information about the missing values. If data is MCAR or MAR, the missing data mechanism can safely be ignored. The data can therefore be examined in an adequate way to replace the missing values. If the data is ‘not missing at random’ (NMAR), the mechanism is non-ignorable. In such a case, the missing values are dependent on both the observed and the missing values,
and highly specialized models must be used to handle such missing data (Allison 2002: 4-5).

The applicable mechanism is generally unknown and cannot be tested empirically. In this study, MAR is assumed. MCAR rarely occurs in practical research. It is implausible that missing values only occur because of unsystematic random mistakes made by the interviewer or a question that was not asked in the whole sample (missing by design). In most cases, missing values result from the refusal or incapability of the people to answer a question (Arzheimer 2008: 213-215). If this happens it is possible that the observed data contain information about the missing values and it is therefore a MAR case.

In order to avoid inefficient and biased estimates when MAR mechanism is assumed, two alternative approaches to adequately handle missing values exist: Maximum Likelihood (ML) procedures and multiple imputation (MI) (Allison 2003, Olinsky et al. 2003). The decision to use one or the other method depends on the analyses one wants to conduct and the statistical software packages at hand. Because I want to analyze structural equation models, one might think ML procedures as the method of choice. It is a method widely used for estimating structural equation models and it is even able to handle incomplete data. There are several software packages that can calculate direct ML (also called raw ML or full information maximum likelihood (FIML)), a method which spares one from worrying much about missing values because the method is able to produce consistent and efficient estimates even if missing values are in the data set. But ML estimation imposes two important prerequisites: it assumes that the data is MCAR or MAR and multivariate normally distributed. While the first prerequisite is met by my data, the second is not. This fact makes it debatable whether it is appropriate to use FIML. As the multivariate normal distribution condition is clearly violated, I decided not to use it. There is another estimation method, which is more suitable for my data because it does not require multivariate normality. This method also requires raw data (like FIML), but it is not able to handle missing values (more on the estimation method in chapter 4.5.2.1). If I want to apply this method, I have to go for the second possible approach to handling missing values, namely multiple imputation. Allison supports this approach as well: “MI has statistical properties that closely approach the optimality of ML. The principle advantage of MI is that it can be used in almost any situation, whereas ML is much more restricted in its application. […] If you want to estimate your SEM using some method other than ML […], then MI would be a

52 There is another ML procedure handling missing values based on an expectation-maximization algorithm. Because this method can produce less efficient estimates under special circumstances and inconsistent standard errors, it is preferable to use direct ML procedures if available (Allison 2003: 549).
good choice” (2003: 550, similar Olinsky et al. 2003). As I said before, selecting the most appropriate estimation method for my data and model is the most important decision to make when thinking about the preparation of data and research design. The choice of the appropriate estimation procedure is decisive. Therefore, I have decided to set the elegant FIML method aside, and solve the problem of missing values with the help of multiple imputation.

MI is a procedure consisting of three steps: First, during the imputation step, several values for each missing value are generated, creating several fully completed data sets. Second, the fully completed data sets are analyzed separately. And third, the results from the single analyses are combined within a single conjoint estimation (Weins 2006). During the first step, the relevant decisions concerning MI must be made, and the variations in possible theoretical and statistical techniques are high. The established MI techniques generally require multivariate normal distribution (e.g. the models implemented in the well-known freeware NORM by Joseph Schafer). As mentioned above, the data I use are not multivariate normal distributed. Therefore, I rely on a less demanding model. In SPSS, a simpler model is implemented, which uses several univariate conditioned distributions. For each variable containing missing values, a regression model is specified. The kind of regression model used depends on the level of measurement of the dependent variable, e.g. logistic regression is used for categorical variables. As the level of measurement of my variables is either nominal (only dummy variables) or ordinal, logit models are specified. The used imputation method is called ‘fully conditional specification’ (FCS) method. This is an iterative Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) method. For each of the ten iterations and for each variable in the order of the variables in the variable list, the FCS method forms a model for a given variable and uses all other variables in the model as predictors. Then the program imputes the missing values of that given variable based on observed data by using the predicted values from the regression model. This is continued until the maximum number of iterations has been reached and the estimates for the missing values have stabilized. The imputed values, given when the maximum iteration has been reached, are saved in a new data set (Arbuckle 2008b: 17-35). This step is repeated several times depending on the number of data sets one wants to create. According to the literature, five imputed data sets yield more than 90 percent efficiency if half of the information is missing; this is by far not the case in my data. If one third or one tenth of the information is missing, the efficiency will be 94 or 98 percent, respectively (Schafer/Olsen 1998: 548). Therefore, I have decided to impute five data sets for each Eurobarometer data set that I use.

Furthermore, the included variables must be specified. The imputation model should contain at least all variables that are a part of the empirical model to be analyzed with the imputed data sets. If a variable is included in the empirical
model, but not in the imputation model, the correlations between this variable and the other variables will be biased towards zero (Schafer/Olsen 1998: 550-551, King et al. 2001: 56). In addition, other variables can be included if they highly correlate with the variables from the model to increase the performance of the MI procedure. These variables are called auxiliary variables. The imputation models of this study include all variables, which are used to measure the latent constructs in the following structural equation models. Then I included one auxiliary variable, namely the indicator measuring the perception on whether a country has benefited from being a member of the EU, because this general variable highly correlates with a set of variables in my model. It is possible to define the role of each variable in the imputation model: the variable can only serve as a predictor and is not imputed or it can be both, a predictor and a dependent variable that is to be imputed. Because I need imputations for all variables in my empirical model and I have only one auxiliary variable I treated all variables as predictors and dependent variables to simplify matters. Hence, for all variables included, I impute valid values replacing all ‘Don’t know’ and no answers.

The following multivariate analyses are based on the five imputations calculated for each data set included in this study. To obtain a single set of results for each point in time, parameters and standard errors are computed for all five completed data sets separately. These values are then combined using Rubin’s rules (Rubin 1987: 76). Without using these rules, the computed standard errors would be too low (Allison 2002: 29-30). To get final point estimates, one must calculate the mean of the five single estimates. The estimation of standard errors is done with the help of a formula, which includes the within-imputation variance (i.e. the mean of the variances across all completed data sets), the between-

The variables will be discussed in a separate chapter on measuring latent constructs in structural equation models (see Chapter 4.4, for a list see Appendix).

I left all optional procedure settings to the default settings except for the value, which specifies the maximum number of model parameters allowed when imputing any variable. This was set to 200 because my model contains more parameters than the specified limited default setting. To replicate the results exactly, the same procedure settings, the same data order, the same variable order and the same initialization number must be used. To replicate this study, the following information is important: The used procedure settings were described in this chapter, the data order was not changed, the variable order can be found in the Appendix and the initialization value is 19800211 for each of the five imputations I have done.

The formula is: 

\[ S.E.(\bar{r}) = \sqrt{\frac{1}{M} \sum_k s_k^2 + (1 + \frac{1}{M})(\frac{1}{M-1})\sum_k (r_k - \bar{r})^2} \]

with

\( M = \text{number of completed data sets}; \ r_k = \text{parameter in data set } k; \ s_k = \text{standard error in data set } k \) (Allison 2002: 30).
imputation variance (i.e. the variance of the parameters across the completed data sets) and a correction factor (Allison 2002: 30).

4.3 Method: Structural equation modeling

As explained in the theoretical part of this study, eight predictors of support for the EU are arranged in a causal path model. The appropriate method to test such a model and related hypotheses is structural equation modeling (SEM) (for introductory literature on SEM see e.g. Bollen 1989, Maruyama 1998, Byrne 2001, Schumacker/Lomax 2004). SEM is a part of the causal analyses family, and it is distinctive because it makes it possible to test relationships between latent constructs, which are non-observable variables. Measuring these latent constructs with multiple indicators (measurement model) and testing the relationships between these latent constructs (structural model) are the two main parts of SEM. The measurement model is nothing more than a factor analysis and the structural model is a set of regression analyses, meaning that a full SEM analysis combines approaches from factor and regression analyses (Backhaus 2003: 346-350). I will shortly explain these two components of SEM and emphasize their appropriateness for this study.

Social science research is often interested in phenomena that cannot be observed directly and thus cannot be measured directly. Examples of such abstract phenomena or latent constructs in the context of this study are support or identity. A latent construct is measured by a number of observed variables, called manifest variables or indicators. Having theoretically discussed the significance of a latent variable and having checked the availability of indicators in a given data set, one defines the latent variable in operational terms. Thereby, the multiple indicators should represent the latent constructs as well as possible. Through linking the unobservable construct to observable variables, the measurement of the abstract phenomenon is possible (Byrne 2001: 4). Statistically, the measurement model tests if the correlations between indicators related to a certain latent variable can be traced back to the influence of this latent variable; in other words, latent variables are thought to reflect an underlying process that has created the correlations between the indicators. In the measurement model of SEM, one determines what indicators in a given data set are related to each other; the indicators define an unobserved variable through this relation (Backhaus 2003: 346, Schumacker/Lomax 2004: 168-169, 200-201, Tabachnick/Fidell 2007: 56 For a discussion on definitions of latent variables and their use in social sciences see Bollen (2002).
Therefore, the measurement model is simply a factor analysis, or more precisely, a confirmatory factor analysis.

Factor analysis is an adequate method for detecting relations between indicators and latent constructs. One can distinguish between exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Both methods seek to identify relations between a set of indicators and a smaller set of factors, in other words, latent constructs, i.e. both types of factor analysis are dimension reduction methods. Their common aim is to find factors that are responsible for the variation and covariation among given indicators. But the methods differ in the starting points of the factor analysis. In the first approach (EFA), no assumptions about the relationships between the indicators and possible factors are determined in advance. Therefore, the empirical result of this method shows what indicators correlate with each other, or more precisely, what indicators make up one factor and how many factors are extracted. EFA is an explorative, data-driven, more descriptive approach. In contrast, the second approach (CFA) requires prior knowledge or assumptions about the relations between indicators and factors. The number of factors and the assumed structure, namely what indicator is represented by what factor, are then to be confirmed empirically. With this approach, one can evaluate if a given model soundly reproduces the variance-covariance matrix of the indicators (for overviews of factor analyses see e.g. Thompson 2004, Brown 2006, Tabachnick/Fidell 2007: 607-675).

Both methods are meaningful ways to test the relationships between given indicators and latent constructs before a structural model is specified or before a complete SEM is tested. Generally, EFA is the first step in analyzing the underlying structure of given indicators. The empirical results of EFA, together with elaborated theoretical assumptions, are the basis for a CFA, which in turn is the foundation or the measurement model of a SEM analysis. This means that latent variables must be soundly measured before the relations between them are modeled. A CFA is the appropriate way to test the validity of the measurement. When the measurement model is satisfactorily specified, the structural model can be defined (Byrne 2001: 5-6, Heyder/Schmidt 2003: 197, Brown 2006: 14, 41).

The structural model in SEM – like other causal analyses – demands intensive thinking about the relationships between the latent variables before adopting a statistical procedure. After theoretically clarifying the directions of influence in the model, a statistical model can be specified. With the statistical model’s help, it is tested whether these theoretical assumptions correspond to the empirical data. Therefore, the causal analysis is by its nature a confirmatory approach and a hypotheses-testing procedure (Byrne 2001: 3, Backhaus 2003: 334). It is worth noting that – strictly speaking – causal relations are not statistically tested. Even if the temporal order of the variables is well-reasoned and the variables in the model are sorted in a way assuming causality, this placement of variables is still

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only the result of theoretical considerations. The statistical test only confirms or falsifies the assumed structure in the model but it cannot statistically prove causality (Hoyle/Robinson 2004: 215-216, 222-223). Technically speaking, SEM presumes a structure in the covariances between the observed variables, and it is tested if the data fits the modeled structure. By comparing the expected population covariance matrix (model-based matrix given that the model is true) with the observed sample covariance matrix (empirical matrix generated from the sample data without an underlying model), the fit or appropriateness of the hypothesized model can be evaluated. The smaller the difference between the model-based matrix and the sample matrix, the better the structural model represents the relations in the data (Byrne 2001: 76-79, Ullman 2007: 680).

To calculate the causal relations between latent constructs in a model, these relations are reflected in a set of regression equations which are named structural equations in the SEM context. These relations can also be illustrated graphically in a path diagram which pictorially shows the conceptualization of the theory and makes interpretation easier. The direction of arrows between latent constructs shows the assumed causal relationship between them. Thus, a path diagram is “[a]n effective way of communicating statistical hypotheses regarding the status of and associations among a set of [latent] variables” (Hoyle/Robinson 2004: 216).

Even if the structural model is generally a regression approach, it is better suited for handling complicated relations between variables than normal OLS regressions. Complex structures are, e.g. relations including more than one dependent variable, relations with one or more mediator variables, relations with moderator or interaction effects, and non-recursive relations. Such complex structures, and even a combination of such complex structures, can be modeled and tested with SEM tools (Schumacker/Lomax 2004, Arbuckle 2008a).

In the description of my model of generalized EU support, I made clear that mediator effects and moderator effects are relevant in this case. Mediation occurs as the influence of national attitudes on EU support is mediated by specific EU attitudes. A moderator effect is assumed in two respects; time and political sophistication can influence the effects between different latent variables in the model. I will concentrate on these two examples of complex structures to further explain what these effects are about and how they are treated in a structural model. First of all, from a general statistical point of view, a mediating or intervening effect implies a chain of causation, in which one variable (X1) affects another variable (X2), which in turn affects the dependent variable (Y).

“[M]ediators establish ‘how’ or ‘why’ one variable predicts or causes an outcome variable. […] A mediator is the mechanism through which a predictor influences an outcome variable” (Frazier et al. 2004: 116, cf. as well Baron/Kenny 1986). Two cases can be distinguished: (1) Partial mediation, where X1 has a
mediated or indirect influence on Y and also a direct influence on Y. Indirect effect plus direct effect result in the total effect of X₁ on Y. (2) Full or complete mediation, where the direct influence of X₁ on Y is not assumed and their relation only exists via X₂. Here, the indirect effect is equivalent to the total effect and it is the product of the direct effects from X₁ on X₂ and from X₂ on Y (Hoyle/Robinson 2004, Urban/Mayerl 2008: 302-305). Both cases can easily be specified in a structural model as this is the appropriate method for examining direct and indirect effects of variables. According to Cheung and Lau, SEM is the best method to provide unbiased estimates of mediation (in contrast to partial correlation or hierarchical regression models) (2008, cf. as well Hoyle/Robinson 2004). In my study, both cases of mediation are relevant. Full mediation is at hand because I assume that national performances influence EU support, mediated through specific EU attitudes only. I explicitly do not assume a direct influence of these national attitudes on EU support. Partial mediation describes the relationship between national identity, European identity, and EU support as I presume that national identity has a mediated influence and a direct influence on EU support. A model that includes such chains of causation is called a second-order model because it includes at least two latent variables on different levels in the model – the mediator (X₂) and the dependent variable (Y) – which are explained by other latent variables. The latent construct X₁ (in my case, an attitude towards the nation-state) is the ‘classical’ independent variable, which explains variance of the latent X₂ (its equivalent specific EU attitude), which in turn affects the latent Y (EU support). Thus, in the model, there are first-order variables, the mediators, which are explained by independent variables, and there is a second-order variable, the dependent variable, which is explained by the first-order variables and indirectly by the independent variables. In the case of partial mediation, the second-order variable is also directly affected by the independent variable (Byrne 2001: 38). As a result, SEM provides regression coefficients for the direct paths between X₁ and X₂, X₂ and Y, and X₁ and Y if a partial mediation is modeled. Additionally, a coefficient for the indirect effect of X₁ on Y (which is simply the product of the two direct paths) is given. Because of the possibility to arrange variables in the structural model, theoretical considerations about causal relations or assumed temporal orders of variables can be analyzed and interpret-

57 In SEM terminology, independent latent variables are named exogenous variables as they explain variance of other latent variables but their own variance is not explained. Latent variables that are influenced by other latent variables are called endogenous variables. These endogenous variables can be influenced directly or indirectly by exogenous variables or endogenous variables. In the case of mediation, exogenous variables directly influence the endogenous variables on the first order (mediator), which in turn influence the endogenous variables on the second order (Byrne 2001: 5).
ed (for partial and full mediation in SEM see e.g. Shrout/Bolger 2002, James et al. 2006, MacKinnon et al. 2007, Cheung/Lau 2008).

The other complex effect which can be niftily handled in SEM is the moderator or interaction effect. In contrast to mediation, “[q]uestions involving moderators address ‘when’ or ‘for whom’ a variable most strongly predicts or causes an outcome variable. More specifically, a moderator is a variable that alters the direction or strength of the relation between a predictor and an outcome” (Frazier et al. 2004: 116, cf. as well James/Brett 1984, Baron/Kenny 1986). Hence, a moderator is an interaction, meaning that the relation between X₁ and Y depends on the value of a moderator or interaction variable (X₂). Compared with a chain of causation including a mediator, where the mediator is causally subsequent to the independent variable, moderators and independent variables “are at the same level in regard to their role as causal variables antecedent or exogenous to certain criterion effects” (Baron/Kenny 1986: 1174). Furthermore, the moderator needs not be related to either the independent or the dependent variable as it influences the association between them and not the variables themselves (Hoyle/Robinson 2004). Testing whether a moderator is working involves the evaluation of the effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable for different values of the moderator, i.e. the effect of X₁ on Y is compared for different values of X₂. To illustrate, here are two examples from my model: The effect of a specific EU attitude on EU support is compared at four points in time; the effect of a national attitude on its equivalent specific EU attitude is compared at different levels of political sophistication. A moderator effect is said to exist if a substantial difference in the effects of X₁ on Y occurs for different values of the moderator. For instance, the relation changes from a positive to a negative association or from a strong relation to a weak or nonexistent one. As formulated in my hypotheses, I expect that the moderator effects, ‘time’ and ‘political sophistication’, influence the strength of the relation between national attitudes and specific EU attitudes or EU support, respectively (Baron/Kenny 1986, Agresti/Finlay 2009: 311).

Within the structural model of SEM, categorical and continuous variables can serve as moderators. As the assumed moderators in this study are categorical variables, in the following paragraph, I concentrate on the possibility of handling this kind of moderators in SEM (how to handle continuous variables see e.g. Hoyle/Robinson 2004, for the use of product terms see e.g. Reinecke 1999). In such a case, the so-called multiple group comparison approach can be applied. This technique estimates the relations between the independent and the dependent variables separately for different groups. The groups are formed based on the different values that the categorical moderator variable can adopt (Frazier et al. 2004, Arbuckle 2008a: 377-384). For example, possible moderator variables that are based on characteristics of individuals include gender, age, place of residence, level of education, or, as in my study, the level of political sophistication.
In this case, citizens are grouped in two groups according to their level of knowledge; one group consists of more sophisticated persons and the other of less sophisticated persons. On the macro-level, examples are types of political regimes, geographical positions of countries, old versus new EU member states, or, what I am interested in, points in time. For instance, the four points in time, between 2003 and 2007, are the values of the moderator ‘time’ and each point in time is treated as one group in my multiple group comparison regarding temporal changes. Once the groups are defined, the assumed model is specified. It is possible to specify slightly different measurement and structural models for each group if there are theoretical or empirical reasons. Then the models for each group are tested simultaneously. The results for each group, i.e. various parameters (e.g. factor loadings, regression weights, means, or residuals), can be analyzed in view of significant differences between the groups. If differences in the coefficients of the causal paths between independent and dependent variables are observed, a moderator effect is detected (James/Brett 1984, Reinecke 1999, Byrne 2001: 173-264, 2004, Heyder/Schmidt 2003).

As has been stated above, complex models can be handled with a SEM approach. Therefore, it is possible to analyze mediation and moderator effects within one and the same analysis. “Moderated mediation refers to instances in which the mediated relation varies across levels of a moderator” (Frazier et al. 2004: 117, cf. Baron/Kenny 1986, MacKinnon et al. 2007). This is exactly the case in my model. I assume, firstly, that the effects of national attitudes on EU support are mediated through specific EU attitudes and, secondly, that these effects are moderated by time and by political sophistication.

To conclude this chapter on SEM, I want to summarize the advantages of this approach so as to explain why it is the appropriate method for my study. First, this method can incorporate latent variables which can be measured with multiple indicators. By conducting a CFA, it is possible to test a measurement model, i.e. the measurement quality of latent constructs can be checked if there are multiple indicators for each construct. Secondly, when testing the structural model, i.e. the relationship between the latent constructs, SEM provides estimates adjusted by measurement errors, i.e. the method explicitly estimates and corrects for measurement errors. Third, the method tests all theoretical assumptions simultaneously, i.e. the analysis tests the entire set of relations in the hypothesized model in one step; that is why it is easier to falsify the model. Fourth, goodness of fit measures are provided, indicating if the data fits the theoretically postulated relations. Fifth, this analytic framework allows analyzing complex models, including mediators and moderators (Byrne 2001: 3-4, Schumacker/Lomax 2004: 5-6, Cheung/Lau 2008: 297, for an evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of SEM see e.g. Nachtigall et al. 2003). All things considered, the method is ap-
appropriate to test the attitude structure underlying EU support in a differentiated way.

4.4 **Operationalization**

This chapter is about the measurement of the dependent variable, support for the EU, and the measurement of the determinants of EU support which have already been introduced when I explained the theoretical model of EU support. As I will test the model as a structural equation model, all constructs in the model (the dependent variable and the determinants) are assumed to be latent constructs, which means that I try to measure these constructs with multiple indicators. In the following chapter, I describe the indicators used and assign them to the respective latent constructs.

To measure the dependent variable, the latent construct ‘generalized support for the European Union’, two questions are used. The first question is the famous membership-question: “Generally speaking, do you think that (country)'s membership of the European Union is…? (1) a good thing, (2) a bad thing, (3) neither good nor bad?”58 The second question: “In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image?”59 Both indicators fulfill two essential requirements for any measurement of regime support. Firstly, the object to which the question refers must be the regime in general; secondly, it must be possible to express a generalized evaluation of the regime (good/bad, positive/negative) (Muller et al. 1982: 246, Niedermayer 1995a, Fuchs et al. 1998). The two indicators clearly fulfill these requirements and therefore, they are appropriate to measure EU support.60 Another ad-

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58 This is the question wording according to the EB. In the CCEB, the question wording is slightly different to take into account that the countries were not members of the EU yet. The verb ‘is’ is replaced by its subjunctive form ‘would be’.

59 Again, the CCEB version of this question slightly differs from its EB counterpart: “And, in general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Union?”

60 There is another indicator, which is quite similar to the two presented indicators. The question asks whether the country has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the EU. Although the indicator fulfils the requirements, it is not used to measure support. The prominence of the word ‘benefit’ gives this question a slightly different meaning, which is less generalized, and rather highlights an instrumental thinking about the system. Therefore, the question is not useful in my context because I want to distinguish between generalized support for the EU and EU systemic performance as an instrumental calculation, which would be impossible using a question with a mixed character such as the benefit question.
vantage is the scaling of the indicators. With three and five categories, respectively, it is possible to treat the variables as quasi-metric.

As elaborated in the theoretical part, there are predictors of EU support representing attitudes towards the EU and the nation-state. The predictors from each political level are adjusted in a way because the same constructs exist on each political level. All predictors are arranged in a systematic order as I assume that specific attitudes from the national level only affect the equivalent specific attitudes on the European level. To take into account this theoretical order on the empirical level, I try to align the measurement of the predictors as well.

Generalized performance of the nation-state and of the EU, i.e. the explicit evaluation of political institutions, which are implemented on one of the political levels and composed of political actors acting on one or both political levels, are measured by questions about trust in various national and European political institutions. For both political systems, trust in the main institutions that embody the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary is covered. Generalized performance of the nation-state is measured by questions about trust in the national government, the first national legislative chamber and the national justice. Regarding the European level, trust in the following four institutions is included: Council of the European Union, European Commission, European Parliament, and European Court of Justice. The advantage of the measurement is that on both political levels, generalized performance is evaluated with a focus on the same aspect because all questions refer to trust in institutions. Another advantage is that the trust-indicators reflect the hybrid character of generalized performance regarding its standard of evaluation as I have assumed that this construct can comprise both instrumental as well as value-based views. According to Wessels, “trust is somewhat in between or a mixture of both instrumental and moral standards of evaluation”; however, “utilitarian considerations may be more relevant for trust than moral standards” (2009a: 168). I borrow this understanding for my interpretation of trust. A problem with this measurement is that trust may be a very general attitude which either describes a generalized attitude on the procedural level of a political system (i.e. performance) or an attitude already settled on the structural level (i.e. support for a regime). Both interpretations can be found in the literature (cf. e.g. Easton 1975: 447-450, Fuchs et al. 2009: 22-23, Wessels 2009a). Despite this ambiguity, I decided to use the trust-indicators but I will carefully consider the results of the dimension reduction procedures to find

61 The exact question wording and the coding of the single indicators can be found in the Appendix. To simplify interpretation, all indicators are recoded in a way; that the higher number indicates higher EU support in the sense described in the theoretical part of this study.
out whether or not the indicators measuring trust in European institutions are seen distinctively from the measures of EU regime support.

The constructs, ‘democratic performance of the nation-state’ and ‘democratic performance of the EU’, are measured by respondents’ satisfaction with the functioning of the democracy in the nation-state and the EU, respectively. These two questions are the only ones in the data sets that can represent the constructs adequately. Unfortunately, I cannot measure the constructs with multiple indicators; yet, it is better to restrict the measurement to one indicator rather than use an inappropriate one. In this case, it must be (unrealistically) assumed that the given construct and its indicator are identical and the measure of the construct with one item is perfectly reliable. It is not possible to use the advantage of SEM to test for the measurement qualities regarding a construct. The questions used here refer to the procedural level in the model of support because, by focusing on the functioning of the democracy, they address a generalized and summarized evaluation of the political actors regarding their democratic behavior like responsiveness or guaranteeing fundamental rights such as liberty and equality. The question wording, most importantly the phrase ‘are you satisfied’, highlights the moral or value-based connotation of this indicator. Here again, the benefit of the using identical question wording when measuring democratic performance on each political level is that the same aspects of performance come to the fore.

By contrast, the measurement of national and EU systemic performance is not identical. To measure systemic performance of the nation-state, I use attitudes towards the national economic situation and the national employment situation.

The construct ‘democratic performance’ reflects value-based attitudes. Because the literature on EU support in CEE has revealed the relevance of values-based determinants in this context, it could be argued that it might be meaningful to include other political values as determinants. A reasonable construct could be one describing the attitudes towards democratic transition and market reforms (Cichowski 2000, Tucker et al. 2002, Christin 2005, Jacobs/Pollack 2006, Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006c, Tanasoiu/Colonescu 2008). However, it is questionable whether such attitudes still play an important role in the period under investigation. Moreover, these attitudes are implicitly already a part of my model because I have included the attitude towards the democratic performance of the nation-state. Even if this concept does not capture attitudes towards reforms or developments in new democracies, it gives a picture about value-based considerations as the attitude towards the functioning of the current national democracy is surveyed. Therefore, there is no need for amending the specified attitude model. Furthermore, it would not be possible to measure concrete attitudes towards the transformation process because survey questions covering these attitudes are no longer a part of the Eurobarometer. The Central and Eastern Eurobarometer (1990-1997) contain questions dealing with democratic and economic reforms; in the CCEB and EB used here, such questions are not asked. Another value-based attitude, post-materialism, is excluded as well. Besides newer findings in the Western context which do not unconditionally support the post-materialism hypothesis anymore (e.g. Janssen 1991, Anderson/Reichert 1996), its application in the Eastern context is highly questionable (Ehin 2001).
Both questions activate sociotropic attitudes as they are about the national situation instead of the personal situation. Furthermore, they point to the future by asking about the situation in the next 12 months, giving these indicators a prospective character. Both characteristics – the sociotropic and the prospective view – are assumed to be influential when evaluating political performance generally (MacKuen et al. 1992, Norpoth 1996, Harper 2000). Unfortunately, there are no other indicators to measure further dimensions of systemic performance. This is not a big problem because economic attitudes dominate when evaluating the performance of a system instrumentally (Fuchs 2003: 32). To make the restriction of the construct clear, I use the precise term ‘national economic performance’. Systemic performance of the EU can be measured by a bundle of questions concerning the role that the EU plays regarding different policies (positive or negative role). To capture the construct ‘EU systemic performance’ completely, these policies should represent all relevant policies. Roller presents a list of political goals that a system should fulfill, which is already listed in chapter 2.2.2.1. The rubrics are international and domestic security, wealth, socioeconomic security and equality, and environmental protection (Roller 2005: 29). With the questions from the CCEB and EB, it is possible to represent all rubrics with one or two political issues. The issues used to measure the construct are defense/foreign affairs, terrorism (reflecting international and domestic security), economic situation, unemployment (reflecting wealth), health care system, pensions (reflecting security and equality), and protection of the environment. Therefore, in the case of systemic performance, I give up on the idea of measuring the concept on both political levels identically because I would lose too much information if I restrict systemic performance of the EU to economic performance alone.

The two constructs, ‘national identity’ and ‘European identity’, can both be described by one single item. The indicators ask for respondents’ felt attachment to the nation-state and Europe (in 2003 and 2004), Europe and the EU (in 2006

63 The same question asks for further political issues. Through theoretical considerations with regards to the complete and consistent coverage of the political goals and through bivariate analyses of all political issues asked, I decided to include the seven issues mentioned.

64 I tested the complete model with EU systemic performance reduced to EU economic performance measured by the role that the EU plays regarding the economic situation and unemployment. The results resemble the results drawn with the expanded measurement of systemic performance. The main difference is that the narrowly-defined EU economic performance has a higher influence on EU support than the broadly defined EU systemic performance during all points in time measured. Nevertheless, with regard to the hypotheses, the difference would not lead to completely different conclusions.
using a split file), and the EU (in 2007), respectively.\textsuperscript{65} The questions are appropriate because the affective component of the questions is very strong (using the word ‘feel’), and it is this aspect of identity that is most important when making a distinction between the cognitive-evaluative performance predictors and affective-evaluative identity predictors. An advantage of these questions is that they are distinct questions and the identification with each community can be answered separately. This is, for example, not possible if the two identities are asked together in one question where respondents have to decide in conjunction whether they feel national, European, or both, as it is the case in another Eurobarometer question (“In the near future you see yourself as: national only, national and European, European and national, European only”). Compared with this question, another advantage of my measure is the focus on today’s feeling of belonging and not a prospective prediction (Bruter 2003: 1154). Of course it must be noted that the items first and foremost cover the affective dimension of identity and other parts are not reflected. For instance, knowledge of belonging to a group is only implicitly covered because feeling of attachment implies the awareness of the existence of the in-group and one’s own objective membership. Unfortunately, the separation from other out-groups is missing completely, making the indicator a rather weak measure of identity. The reduction of the construct to the affective moment must be taken into account when interpreting the empirical model. However, despite problems with these indicators, at least it is possible to measure both constructs of identity with the same item.

\textsuperscript{65} For the temporal comparison, it is suboptimal that the object that is to be evaluated changes from ‘Europe’ to ‘EU’. However, as the data set of 2006 includes both questions designed as a split file – one half of respondents had to report their attachment to Europe, the other half was asked about their attachment to the EU – it is possible to validate the usefulness of both items. Therefore, I correlate these two items with the measures of EU support as well as with the measure of national identity. The bivariate correlations show meaningful positive correlations without exception (between 0.26 and 0.40). The correlation between the EU support questions with the EU attachment item is slightly higher than with the Europe attachment item, which is reasonable because the item directly refers to the EU and not to the broader concept of Europe. In contrast, the correlation between the national attachment question and the Europe attachment question is higher. Overall, the differences are marginal and a cross-temporal comparison of the influence of European identity on EU support and the influence of national identity on European identity is possible. One remark about the handling of the split file in 2006: Because the items are similar, I combined both measures into one variable, which was then used for the multivariate analyses.
4.5 Empirical analyses

4.5.1 Level and development of support for the European Union

Figure 4 and Figure 5 show the level and development of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe from 2001 until 2007 as measured by the membership- and image-questions from the CCEB and EB data sets. Figure 4 displays both, the proportion of citizens saying that the EU is a good thing or having a positive image of the EU and the share of respondents expressing negative views on the EU (bad thing; negative image) meaning they deny support to the EU. The first figure reveals substantial support for the EU. During the period under investigation a relative majority of people supports the EU. For each point in time, more than 40 percent show their support by answering that the EU is a good thing or indicating that they have a very or fairly positive image of the EU. On average, 50 percent of the respondents support membership and 46 percent have a positive image. In contrast, at no point in time do more than 20 percent of citizens deny support. On average, only 11 percent say that the EU is a bad thing, and for 14 percent of the population, the EU conjures up a very or fairly negative image.

The development of support is characterized by an up-and-down-development. Based on answers to the membership-question, 46 percent supported the EU at the beginning of the CCEB surveys. Support increased to more than 50 percent during the years before the accession. In spring 2004, shortly before the EU enlargement, however, support dropped to 42 percent, which was the lowest level of support in this region ever. A half year later, support increased again to around 50 percent, and in 2007, the last measure point, 54 percent of respondents asserted that membership was a good thing. The development of the image-question mirrors this development albeit on a somewhat lower level. Negative answers to the membership- or to the image-questions take quite the opposite direction. At times when support is high, explicit denial of support is low and vice versa. The two curves resemble each other but the decrease of negative answers is more obvious with regard to the image-question because its 2001 starting point is higher. The share of Central and Eastern Europeans believing that the EU is a bad thing reaches around 10 percent at all points in time, except for spring 2004 when this share increased to more than 15 percent. Between 14 and 20 percent of those surveyed had a very or fairly negative image of the EU before the accession. This share has decreased considerably during the first years of membership to a stable 11 percent since spring 2006.

Although support is growing slightly and rejection of the EU is decreasing over time, there are remarkable throwbacks. The most striking one occurred in spring 2004 when support dropped by almost 10 percentage points in terms of
the membership-question and 6 percentage points in terms of the image-question. Negative answers increased simultaneously, that all may be a hint that the mood was exceptional in 2004. Shortly before the enlargement, general attitudes towards the EU in CEE worsened. This may have been due to some political struggles. For instance, during this period of time, the EU and European solidarity was rocked by contentious negotiations on the EU constitution and the participation of single countries in the Iraq war (Beichelt 2004a: 62). The throwback in fall 2005 can be explained by the failed referendums on the EU constitution in France and the Netherlands in May and June of that year. At the time, the EU was in a deep crisis and the insecurity about the EU’s future might have led to a decrease in support.

Figure 4: Level and development of support for and rejection of the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe, 2001-2007

![Diagram showing the level and development of support for and rejection of the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe, 2001-2007](https://example.com/diagram.png)


Both questions give the respondents the possibility to avoid a definite positive or negative answer by taking a neutral position. The possible answers (neither good nor bad thing; neutral image) are depicted in Figure 5. The share of those who are indifferent varies between 30 and 41 percent across all points in time. This rather high percentage can be an expression of a low level of information and
awareness or of the complexity of the topic. Because the two questions ask for a very general opinion about the EU, on the one hand, people can favor the middle category because they know too little to give a definite answer or, on the other hand, they know a lot and come up with pros and cons, which leads them to the neutral position. This point cannot be resolved here with the data set for the total population; it will be addressed again, however, when comparing different knowledge groups (see Chapter 4.7.1).

Figure 5: Level and development of indecisive attitudes towards the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe, 2001-2007

![Graph showing the level and development of indecisive attitudes towards the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe, 2001-2007.](https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845238043)

Partly because of the possibility to opt for a middle category and the two questions being comparatively easy to answer, the number of missing answers (‘Don’t know’ or no answers) is quite low. The share of the population who did not answer the membership-question started at over 10 percent, but decreased steadily to less than 3 percent in 2007. Regarding the image-question, there were no more than 6 percent of the population with missing answers. This share also decreased to less than 2 percent, indicating that more and more people were able to answer questions about the EU over time. This confirms the assumption that the experience with the EU increases the ability to form an opinion. Over time,
more and more people become able to decide generally whether or not they support the EU.

The frequency distributions of more specific EU attitudes show that the low number of ‘Don’t know’ answers to the EU support questions is exceptional. Generally, there are many missing answers to questions dealing with the EU. This is especially evident if similar questions about the EU and the nation-state are compared. For instance, in the period under investigation, only between 4 and 5 percent of all respondents were unable to give an opinion about their satisfaction with the functioning of the nation-state’s democracy. In contrast, between 19 (in 2007) and 37 percent (in 2003) did not answer the same question about the functioning of the EU. Similar results are observed when comparing the answers towards trust in various institutions. No more than 10 percent of all respondents gave no answer to questions dealing with trust in national institutions; however, when asked about European institutions, the number of missing answers varied between 19 percent (for the EP in 2007) and 49 percent (for the Council and the Court in 2003). Even if the ‘Don’t know’ answers towards EU questions decrease over time (e.g. cf. the just mentioned EU functioning question or other examples like the missing answers of the EP question (from 32 to 19 percent) or the Council question (from 49 to 29 percent)), the percentage remains comparatively high. These findings are in accordance with my theoretical assumptions: the EU is a remote and complex system and, for ordinary citizens, it is very difficult to form opinions about this system. In contrast, they are much more familiar with the nation-state, so attitudes towards this system and parts of this system can serve as shortcuts.

To conclude the descriptive analyses of the dependent variables, I want to draw attention to the results from those four points in time with which I am especially concerned.66 These moments describe average results regarding support for the EU around the accession of the eight Central and Eastern European countries. At no point in time are unusual answer patterns detected. Although the trend of increasing support over time is not clearly given in this sample as the levels of support at the first three points in time are quite similar, the highest support across these four points is measured in 2007, the last measurement point. The reverse picture can be found with regard to negative answers. At the first point in time, in 2003, the share of negative answers is the highest across all dates studied, but there is no observable steady decline in the sample. Among those who refuse to answer the respective questions, we observe a similar trend as described above, namely that the number of ‘Don’t know’ answers decreases remarkably

66 The four points in time are: Fall 2003, Fall 2004, Spring 2006, Fall 2007; they are underlined in Figure 4 and Figure 5.
over the four measurement points. All in all, the selected points in time are suitable for a detailed analysis explaining EU support and the underlying attitude structure.

4.5.2 The attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

This chapter seeks to explain generalized support for the EU in CEE and the corresponding underlying attitude structure. As has been stated, the multivariate analysis is conducted with the Eurobarometer data set from 2007 to explore intensively the most recent situation in the new post-communist EU member states. Bearing in mind the specific requirements and procedures of SEM described above, my multivariate empirical analyses are structured as follows: I first conduct an EFA and then a CFA to test if the assumed dimensions in the attitude structure underlying EU support are reflected in the data. Moreover, these steps are needed to prepare the subsequent SEM analysis. Eventually, a full SEM estimates the relevance of the included determinants in explaining EU support, and tests the position of the determinants in the model and their relations to each other and to EU support.

4.5.2.1 Findings from dimension reduction methods

With the help of the EFA, including all indicators thought to represent the latent constructs in the forthcoming SEM, I test if the indicators can be described by a limited number of factors. This will be an explorative test to determine if the indicators, which are theoretically considered to represent a particular factor, load together on one factor. This analysis gives a first hint as to whether there is an underlying structure in the data and whether this structure resembles the theoretical assumptions. The EFA shall thus clarify whether citizens can distinguish between different attitude constructs specified in the model of EU support. I am aware that indicators measuring attitudes will not follow a clear cut pattern perfectly because attitudes are not as distinct from each other as theoretically assumed, even less so if we assume a causal relationship between some factors as it is the case in my model. Nonetheless, the analyses can show whether a CFA, with the given indicators, will make sense or if improvements are necessary.

67 The indicators listed in the Appendix are sorted by the assumed latent constructs that they are intended to measure. For each latent construct in the model, the Appendix shows which indicators from the CCEB and the EB are assumed to be related to this latent construct from a theoretical point of view.
The analysis is conducted with the statistical software package SPSS 17.0. Concretely, I have estimated a principle axis analysis with Varimax rotation for an easier interpretation of the factors. The results I present here are the final results, including only the indicators I described in the chapter on operationalization. From a theoretical point of view, the included items are said to measure one of the latent constructs in the model of EU support. The analysis – as all other following multivariate analyses - relies on the five imputed data sets that I have produced for each point in time under investigation. The imputed data sets are free of missing values as all ‘Don’t knows’ and all other refused answers have been replaced by valid values as described in chapter 4.2. To come up with estimations, which can be interpreted, I have combined the five data sets according to Rubin’s rules, which were described in the aforementioned chapter, too.

Table 2 shows that six factors are extracted from the 22 indicators taken from the 2007 data set. Because there are nine theoretically assumed latent constructs, the discrepancy between the number of factors and the number of assumed constructs indicates that the indicators do not represent the assumed constructs exactly. A detailed analysis of the EFA results reveals that three latent constructs are represented by the items that I assume they are represented by. Factor 1 is

68 I do not use an oblique extraction method even though I presume a correlation between the latent constructs that I try to extract with EFA. This is because I want to estimate the factors conservatively as one of the assumptions of the factor analysis is the distinctiveness of factors (Backhaus 2003: 300). In return, I accept cross-loadings. Fortunately, cross-loadings remain within reasonable limits and a meaningful interpretation of the EFA results is possible and convenient. In addition, I back up my results by estimating the EFA using an oblique extraction method (oblimin rotation), which leads to statistically similar results.

69 In analyses preparing the final EFA, I also include nine other variables, namely the benefit variable, trust in the European Central Bank, and seven further items measuring the role the EU plays in various policies. As previously stated, these variables are theoretically problematic for various reasons. Benefit is a hybrid variable that correlates highly with items measuring support but is associated with EU systemic performance as well. EFA shows a stronger association with the support items but because of its misleading wording (‘benefit’), I decide to exclude this variable from my analyses for theoretical reasons. The European Central Bank is another EU institution that respondents should evaluate in terms of trustworthiness. It is the only other institution that is asked in all EB data sets used here. Theoretically, this institution is distinct from the other institutions in this study (Commission, Council, EP, and Court) as it is not a part of the three branches that make up a political system: executive, legislature, and judiciary. This outlier position appears in an EFA as well: it loads on the same factor as the other EU institutions but the loading is substantially weaker. Based on the indicators of the EU’s role in various policies, there are various reasons to concentrate on the seven items I use. These items cover all relevant policies and bivariate analyses show that there are relations between them. The excluded policies have only weak correlations with the items I use. The same picture occurs in the EFA. The inclusion of more policies inflates the number of extracted factors indicating that other and rather distinct dimensions are addressed.
made up of all indicators measuring EU generalized performance; likewise, factor 3 consists of items measuring national generalized performance, and factor 6 incorporates the two items for national economic performance. In addition, the indicators which should measure EU systemic performance load either on factor 4 or factor 5 with reasonable cross-loadings on the other factor. This implies that these items measure two different dimensions of EU systemic performance but the dimensions are somewhat related to each other. Factor 4 incorporates economic (economic situation in general, unemployment) and social (pensions, health care) policies, i.e. more domestic policies; factor 5 includes more transnational policies, namely foreign policy (terrorism, defense) and environmental policy. Hence, citizens distinguish between different policies in a meaningful way, recognizing that some policies are related closer to each other than to others. Nevertheless, citizens can separate these indicators for EU systemic performance from other latent constructs. Therefore, citizens differentiate in a cognitive and evaluative manner between the four constructs: EU and national generalized performance and EU systemic and national economic performance.

This leaves the second factor as the only factor mixing theoretically distinct constructs. Indicators intended to measure EU support, EU and national democratic performance, and European and national identity load together on this single factor. How can one interpret this finding? First, the four constructs that can only be measured with a single item are among these indicators. Clearly, these four constructs cannot make up four separate factors because the goal of a factor analysis is to reduce a set of items to a smaller set of underlying factors. Even if the second factor conjointly includes all single-item-constructs, this finding can be positively interpreted. Since these single-item-constructs cannot make up separate factors, their common loading on one factor, which also includes the support variables, is more in accordance with theoretical considerations than a loading on other factors would be. The fact that they are accompanied by indicators for the dependent variable, EU support, leads to two possible conclusions: (1) citizens do not see differences between democratic performances, identities, and EU support, i.e. the theoretically discussed distinction vanishes as the latent constructs merge into one construct in citizens’ attitude structure; or (2) the conjoint loading on one factor implies a strong association between the constructs. This means that the two assumed chains of causation, national democratic per-

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70 If the four items are left out, the result of the EFA does not change substantially. A first factor is made up of EU generalized performance items, the second and third factors include items measuring EU systemic performance. A fourth is about national generalized performance and a fifth is about national economic performance. The two items measuring EU support load primarily on the first factor but have considerable cross-loadings on the fifth factor. Thus, these two items do not form a separate factor.
formance – EU democratic performance – EU support and national identity – European identity – EU support, are characterized by high correlations and EU support can be determined by these constructs either directly or indirectly. However, the results of an EFA do not allow for such causal interpretations and further analyses are necessary to explain the relations between these factors.

Table 2: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust: Commission</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust: Council</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust: EP</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of the EU</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in the EU</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction: EU democracy</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachment: EU</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction: National democracy</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.33</td>
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<td>Attachment: Nation-state</td>
<td>0.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust: National government</td>
<td>0.81</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
<td>0.81</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
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<td>0.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Defense</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation: National employment situation</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation: National economic situation</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8273. Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 49%. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

I do not want to conceal the cross-loadings of the first and second factors. These cross-loadings suggest that the first factor (EU generalized performance) is in some way related to the second, broadly defined factor. It is peculiar that from the bundle of indicators reflecting the second factor, only the items measuring EU attitudes (EU democratic performance and EU support) have substantial cross-loadings on the first factor. Altogether, this strengthens the assumption that there is an association between different EU attitudes and further research re-
Regarding their special relations to each other is needed. Regarding the national attitudes, the same can be said about the relation between national generalized and national democratic performance as the latter shows a substantial cross-loading on the factor made up by trust in national institutions, which leads to the impression that these two performances – while still distinct concepts – are somewhat connected to each other.

EFA leaves open another question. The factor loading of the indicator measuring national identity is very weak (0.21), i.e. this item cannot be described very well by the extracted dimensions. Therefore, it seems to be a bit of an exceptional attitude within the model of EU support. This suggests that the relation between national identity and European attitudes, including EU support, is not straightforward. This conclusion supports the ongoing discussion in the literature about the influence of national identity on EU support (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2005). This EFA result cannot explain the relation of national identity to EU attitudes, but it draws attention to its possible special position in the model, which should be kept in mind in the following analyses and interpretations of the SEM results.

The EFA is supposed to show whether citizens in CEE can differentiate between different concepts relevant in the attitude structure underlying EU support and whether the single items can be reduced to meaningful latent constructs. Regarding the first goal, generally, citizens are able to distinguish between most of these concepts. The occurrence of one factor reflecting several latent constructs together is mostly due to the fact that four concepts can only be measured by one single item. Secondly, overall, the results of the EFA do not violate any theoretical assumptions about the EU support model. The items that should load together on one factor, because they are supposed to represent the same theoretical construct, load together on a common factor. No item falls out of line by loading on the ‘wrong’ factor, i.e. together with items presumed to measure a different latent construct. Therefore, it is possible to leave all indicators used in the EFA in the CFA model.

Before I proceed with the CFA, I want to summarize briefly the results from the EFA, calculated for the other points in time which are relevant in my study (complete results can be found in the Appendix, Table C.1 to Table C.3). Overall, the results show a pattern that is similar to 2007. For example, EU and national generalized performance always make up two distinct factors; EU systemic performance is represented by one single factor in 2003 and 2004, meaning that the role of the EU in all policies is evaluated together; however, in 2006, domestic and foreign policies are seen distinctively as it is the case in 2007. The clear-cut pattern of national economic performance as a separate factor, which was found in 2007, appears in 2006. In previous years, the items for this concept load together on the same factor as EU support. In 2003, this factor also includes the measures of EU and national democratic performance, which make up a sep-
arate common factor in 2004 and 2006. The role of the two identities varies as well. At the first two points in time, they load together and alone on one common factor. In 2006 European identity goes hand-in-hand with EU-support like in 2007, while national identity is not reflected at all. Furthermore, at all points in time, the items measuring EU support are a part of a factor that consists of various other items as well. Generalized EU support has never been extracted separately; furthermore, considerable cross-loadings are visible. At first glance, this finding may seem to indicate that this generalized attitude is not distinctively present in the citizens’ attitude structure. A more plausible interpretation of this finding, however, is that support shows various associations with other items emphasizing its accentuated position as the variable to explain. The findings provide the first clue regarding the temporal development of the attitude structure which is further analyzed in the chapter on comparison over time. The longer the membership in the EU, the better citizens can differentiate between the concepts underlying EU support. In the first years analyzed, the attitudes are intertwined more with each other, but with experience in the EU, better structured attitudes have developed. Nevertheless, it is possible to include the presented items in a CFA at all points in time.

The strategy applied here in analyzing the EFA results is used in the next paragraph as well. First, I estimate the CFA model with the data set from 2007 and present these results in detail. Then, I will compare them with the results using data sets from past years. I specify a model for a CFA that is identical to a measurement model in SEM. In such a model, which indicator should represent which factor is strictly defined, i.e. it is specified that each indicator loads on a certain factor and on that factor only. If the model fit is satisfying and factor loadings are high, the model adequately represents the data.

All further models presented in this study, including the CFA and the full SEM analyses, are estimated with help from the graphical user interface of the statistical software package Amos 17.0. There are various analysis properties that can be chosen to analyze a model. First and foremost, it is important to decide what estimation method should be applied. This method depends on the data that is used. As my data contains dichotomous and ordinal variables, among them variables with four or more categories that can be treated as quasi-metric variables, and as the data is non-normal distributed, the most appropriate estimation method implemented in Amos is the asymptotically distribution free (ADF)

71 Amos is short for Analysis of Moment Structures. For a detailed description of Amos see Byrne (2001), Arbuckle (2008a). For descriptions and comparisons of various software programs for CFA or SEM see e.g. Ullman (2007), Brown (2006).
method. Schermelleh-Engel et al. state that “[t]his method may also be used if some of the observed variables are ordinal and others are continuous, if the distributions of the continuous variables deviate considerably from normality, or if models include dichotomous variables” (Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003: 27, more on this method: Bollen 1989, further discussion on SEM with ordinal data or non-normal data: Flora/Curran 2004, Finney/DiStefano 2006, Brown 2006, Lei 2009, Curran et al. 1996). The method requires a large sample size for a robust estimation of the asymptotical covariance matrix that is necessary to estimate the model. This is not a problem for my study because the required sample size is easily met by all my pooled data sets (further discussion on sample sizes: Bollen 1989, Hoogland/Boomsma 1998). As described above, the ADF method needs raw data without missing values or weighting. ADF has one restriction: it is not possible to calculate means and intercepts for the latent constructs. However, because my interest lies within the analyses of the path coefficients – the relationships between the latent constructs – this restriction does not hinder me from pursuing my research interest.

With these Amos settings, the CFA for 2007 is estimated. Again, I calculated five CFA with five imputed data sets and combined the results according to Rubin’s rules (cf. Chapter 4.2). The aim of the CFA is to show whether the assumed attitude structure can be confirmed by the data. This happens in a twofold manner: firstly, the values of the factor loadings indicate whether the items linked to a latent construct are well represented by this construct. Secondly, the goodness of fit of the CFA model gives an overall measure of the quality of the fit of the assumed structure to the data. As clarified with the EFA, all 22 indicators can be incorporated into a CFA to test how these indicators behave under constraint specifications. However, it makes no sense to include those latent constructs in the model which can only be measured by one indicator. In such a case, it must

72 The ADF method, as it is called in Amos, is usually known as ‘weighted least squares’. Therefore, it resembles the ‘weighted least squares (WLS)’ method in LISREL or Mplus and the ‘arbitrary distribution generalized least squares (AGLS)’ in EQS (Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003: 27).

73 To test the robustness of my estimations, the results are also checked using bootstrap to estimate parameters, standard error and significance tests (Division of Statistics and Scientific Computation n.d., Finney/DiStefano 2006: 294-297). No substantial differences in the results occurred. Furthermore, the model is tested with the ML estimation method although I am aware that this method is not appropriate for my data. However, again, there are no substantial differences in the parameters and standard errors, but the model fit is worse.

74 A sample size of at least $N \geq 1.5 \cdot p(p+1)$ with $p$=manifest indicators and $p \geq 12$ is required (Backhaus 2003: 364, Jöreskog/Sörbom 1989). In my model 22 indicators are included. Therefore, a sample size of at least $N=759$ is required. My Ns vary between 2703 and 8344 and thus easily outnumber the required sample size.
be assumed that the latent construct is identical to the one observed variable even though this is an unrealistic assumption. But because there are no other adequate indicators in the data sets, I have no other choice. Therefore, it is neither necessary nor possible to measure the relationship between such a latent construct and its sole indicator (Heyder/Schmidt 2003: 197). I do not take into account the concepts, EU and national democratic performance and European and national identity, because they fully correspond to the items, satisfaction with the functioning of the European or the national democracy or attachment with the European or national community, respectively. Ultimately, the CFA consists of five latent constructs, support, EU and national generalized performance, EU systemic performance, and national economic performance. The remaining 18 items are connected to the latent constructs as theoretically discussed (see list of constructs and corresponding items in the Appendix). As I assume that all of these items only load on one factor, I strictly specify these assumed linkages.

A CFA in Amos is done by establishing relations between the latent constructs and their items. These relations are factor loadings and can be interpreted as factor loadings in an EFA. All latent constructs are also related to each other because a complex CFA model expects the factors to covary. Subsequently, all implemented associations can be tested simultaneously in one measurement model. This is a method superior to a series of distinct tests of single measurement models for each construct because it allows for testing whether there are significant cross-loadings, i.e. whether an item does not only load on its factor but on another one as well. I specify the measurement model based on my theoretical assumptions regarding the relations between the factors and their items. I do not model any cross-loadings; all parameters, i.e. factor loadings and covariances, are freely estimated. If this so-called congeneric model does not hold, it is possible to introduce modifications to improve the model fit (Jöreskog 1971, Arbuckle 2008a: 137-144). After calculating a model, Amos provides several statistical parameters which allow for evaluating whether the model fits the data. Among these statistical parameters are modification indices, significance tests, and standard errors which may point to problems with single indicators. Furthermore, various goodness of fit measures reveal whether the whole model works well, i.e. these indices test how the theoretical model fits the empirical data. From the variety of fit measures, I report the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) which Byrne labels as “one of the most informative criteria” (Byrne 2001: 84). The logic behind this estimate is that it does not hypothesize an exact fit but an approximate or close fit in the population, which is by far more realistic. Thus, RMSEA is “concerned with the discrepancy due to approximation” (Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003: 36). The values of RMSEA range between 0 and 1. Smaller values indicate a better fit. According to the literature, values below 0.05 indicate a close fit of the model; values between 0.05 and 0.08
indicate an acceptable fit, and values of 0.08 and more imply a reasonable problem with the model (Hu/Bentler 1995, 1999). The advantages of this fit measure are its relative independence from sample size and its known distribution, so that confidence intervals can be calculated. The upper limit and the lower limit of a 90% confidence interval are given in Amos. Furthermore, the RMSEA is accompanied by the ‘p of close fit’ (p-close). It is the p-value for the null hypothesis that RMSEA is ≤ 0.05. If p-close is larger than 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained and a close model fit can be assumed (Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003: 36-37, Arbuckle 2008a: 589-591). In addition, I report the goodness of fit index (GFI), which is applicable for ADF estimations with large sample sizes (Hu/Bentler 1995), and the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) to support the result drawn from the RMSEA. The GFI is a measure for the explanation of the variances and covariances in the empirical covariance matrix through the model-implied covariance matrix. It ranges from 0 to 1 with higher values indicating a better fit. By a rule of thumb, values higher than 0.90 show an acceptable fit, and values above 0.95 indicate a good fit. AGFI is a measure adjusted for the complexity of a model because it punishes the reduction of degrees of freedom through an increase of parameters to estimate. An acceptable fit is reached with an AGFI of at least 0.85; a good fit is reached with an AGFI of 0.90 (Hu/Bentler 1995, 1999, for a discussion of different fit indices see e.g. Byrne 2001: 79-88, Schermelleh-Engel et al. 2003, Schumacker/Lomax 2004: 79-106, Arbuckle 2008a: 583-603).

The RMSEA for the CFA with the data from 2007 is 0.044 (p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.977; AGFI: 0.969). According to these fit measures, the model works well, i.e. the theoretical model fits the empirical data. A closer look at other statistical values connected to certain parameters reveals that all factor loadings and covariances are statistically significant (p<0.001). Furthermore, no factor loading has an unexpected sign or is so low that removing the item from the model might be suggested. These statistical values thus confirm the assessment of the fit indices.

Modification indices and residual matrices deliver information on what additional constraints, e.g. cross-loadings or covariances between items, would improve the model fit.75 Since I want to test if all the items load only on one single

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75 As the most likely improvements of the model, the modification indices suggest covariances between the items ‘pensions’ and ‘health care’, as well as between ‘terrorism’ and ‘defense’, which are all items measuring the same construct, EU systemic performance. These covariances can be justified because these items are related to each other regarding content. The first pair deals with social policies and the latter pair with foreign policies. Thus, they have something in common that can theoretically justify the introduction of covariances. Following this argumentation for covariances between items, the introduction of only these two covariances seems a bit arbitrary from a theoretical point of view.
latent construct as theoretically assumed, I am especially interested in possible cross-loadings of specific items on latent constructs with which they are not expected to correlate. According to the modification indices, no considerable cross-loading between an item and a ‘wrong’ latent construct is detected. This provides further support that the specification of the model and the measurement of the latent constructs fit the data. As adding covariances is not really necessary to generate an adequate fit, I have decided to leave the model as it is for reasons of simplicity. This means, in the following paragraphs, the congeneric model is interpreted. Nevertheless, the findings from studying the CFA modification indices are kept in mind because they can be useful when modeling the structural model of a full SEM.

As has been stated above, the congeneric model has a close fit and all factor loadings are statistically significant. I concentrate on the interpretation of the factor loadings because, first and foremost, I have conducted the CFA to find out whether the items load strongly enough on ‘their’ latent construct to use this model as a departure for a SEM. The factor loadings presented in Table 3 show that all items are well represented by their underlying factor.76 The strength of all effects reveals their importance in the model, and the sign of each parameter corresponds to the theoretical expectations. The item ‘trust in national justice’ has the relatively weakest association with its factor (standardized parameter: 0.43); all other relations are stronger than 0.5. Overall, the items are suitable for measuring the latent constructs that are a part of the underlying structure of EU support. An interesting finding is the relative balanced strength of the factor load-

For example, from this point of view, covariances between ‘unemployment’ and ‘economic situation’ would be plausible as well. Moreover, such additional constraints can be justified for other reasons like similar question wordings of the items, similar scales, or the items’ placement in the questionnaire (Heyder/Schmidt 2003: 199). Taking these reasons into account, many other covariances in my model can be justified. To avoid non-systematic and mainly empirically driven modifications of the model, I decide to omit covariances if the original, congeneric model is already working well according to the fit indices and if the introduction of additional covariances is only for improving the model.

76 Amos output provides us with unstandardized and standardized solutions. As in the case of EFA, CFA results are generally reported by using standardized estimates. However, such parameters are critically seen in social sciences. Moreover, their interpretation in CFA and SEM is especially problematic because the estimations themselves are based on unstandardized variables and the matrix to analyze a CFA and SEM is a variance-covariance matrix. Nevertheless, I will rely on both parameters depending on the research interest I follow. If possible, I use unstandardized parameters as these parameter estimates are reported in the indicators’ original metrics, which makes it possible to interpret the effects substantively. Furthermore, the unstandardized solution includes standard errors and significance levels to further evaluate the parameters. If I compare the relative strength of relations within a model, I cautiously rely on standardized solutions (King 1986, Brown 2006: 41-42, Arzheimer 2008: 352).
ings within a construct. This implies that the broadly defined concepts are able to reconcile various items that make up different dimensions of a concept. Especially interesting is this finding with regard to EU systemic performance, meaning that this concept captures all these various policies in a balanced way and the broad labeling as ‘systemic’ performance is justified. The same can be said for all latent constructs but one, namely national generalized performance. In this case, the factor loadings of ‘trust in government and parliament’ are almost twice as high as the loading of ‘trust in national justice’. This indicates that the executive and legislature are somewhat closer to each other while the judiciary is a bit separated despite the fact that they are all a part of one and the same construct. The measurement of EU generalized performance shows a similar but less pronounced pattern.

Table 3: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent constructs</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalized support for the EU</td>
<td>Membership in the EU</td>
<td>1.00 (0.77)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image of the EU</td>
<td>1.20 (0.76)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td>Trust: EP</td>
<td>1.00 (0.89)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Commission</td>
<td>1.06 (0.92)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Council</td>
<td>1.05 (0.91)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
<td>0.91 (0.79)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>EU’s role: Defense</td>
<td>0.87 (0.65)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
<td>0.84 (0.63)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.61)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td>0.94 (0.60)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
<td>0.75 (0.57)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
<td>0.80 (0.56)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
<td>0.82 (0.56)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td>Trust: National government</td>
<td>1.08 (0.84)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
<td>1.00 (0.83)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
<td>0.57 (0.43)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>Expectation: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.73)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectation: Employment situation</td>
<td>0.86 (0.65)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8273. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. RMSEA: 0.044; confidence interval: 0.042-0.046; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.977; AGFI: 0.969. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

77 In a CFA and a measurement model for a SEM one indicator per latent construct has to be set to 1 to identify the whole model and to identify the scale of the corresponding latent construct.
Furthermore, in the model, there are considerable covariances with positive signs between the latent constructs, which indicate that there are associations between them and these associations show the expected positive relation (not separately stated). I forgo to interpret them at this point because in the next chapter I will concentrate on the causal relations between the constructs which have been postulated in the theoretical part of this work. Overall, the CFA has proven that the presented measurement model can be used for a full SEM. The sizes of the factor loadings are meaningful, the signs are in the expected direction, and the factor loadings are consistent with the underlying theory.

I test the fit of this congeneric model for the other three points in time in separate analyses with one CFA for each measurement point. The results show that this model works in 2003, 2004, and 2006 as well (results can be found in the Appendix Table C.4 to Table C.6). RMSEA ranges from 0.039 to 0.044 (GFI and AGFI are above their critical values as well), indicating that the overall fit is satisfying at all points in time. A closer look at the individual parameters reveals that they are all statistically significant, considerably strong, and have the correct sign. This all supports the good model fit. In terms of their relative strength, factor loadings follow the same pattern as in 2007, i.e. the balanced strength of the factor loadings of each construct indicates that the underlying factor satisfactorily represents its items. Furthermore, the modification indices and residual matrices do not point to cross-loadings between an item and a ‘wrong’ latent construct. Again, for all data sets, the proposed possible improvements affect a covariance between the items ‘EU’s role in terrorism’ and ‘EU’s role in defense’, and between ‘EU’s role in pensions’ and ‘EU’s role in public health’ (the latter is not suggested for the 2004 data). As has been stated before, I do not add covariances or cross-loadings if they are not necessary for an adequate model fit. To conclude, the congeneric model can be used in 2003, 2004, and 2006 as well because the analyses reveal that this model adequately represents the data at all points in time.

In summary, in addition to the results from the EFA, the CFA also confirm that the assumed attitude structure underlying EU support is found at all the interested points in time. The described CFA is a suitable measurement model for

78 As has been mentioned above, the four points in time can be treated as different groups, and invariances among these groups can be tested with a multiple group comparison in Amos. However, this approach is not used here because I am not interested in group invariances at this point. I only want to clarify whether the congeneric model, generated with the data from 2007, fits the data sets from 2003, 2004, and 2006 as well. Therefore, I only estimate separate CFA models for each point in time. Later, these models can be used for multiple group analyses as measurement models in the so-called baseline models which are the starting points for every multiple group SEM analysis (Byrne 2001, Davidov et al. 2008).
the following: a SEM for 2007 and subsequent models comparing different points in time.

4.5.2.2 Empirical analysis of the model of support for the European Union

Following the theoretical discussion of the relations in the model of EU support and having designed a measurement model via an EFA and a CFA, the next step is to specify a full structural equation model. I have postulated theoretically paths from the latent constructs measuring national attitudes to their equivalent specific EU attitudes, which indicate that national attitudes influence specific EU attitudes. From these EU-related latent constructs, paths lead to the dependent variable, EU support. In addition, a path from national identity to EU support is modeled. These structural relations are to be implemented in the measurement model in Amos, creating a full SEM. The full model is shown in Figure 6. Before estimating the model for 2007 and interpreting any results, I will explain briefly the plain model, which is the baseline model for the subsequent analysis.

Amos’ graphical user interface presents the variables in the model either as boxes, ellipses, or circles. Boxes represent indicators, i.e. all relevant variables for which there is data within the data set to analyze. Ellipses stand for latent constructs. For these, no values are saved in the data set. Small circles symbolize error terms, indicating that in SEM the estimates are adjusted by measurement errors. In addition to geometric forms, the model can include two different kinds of arrows. First, there are single-headed, straight arrows. They define a directional association either between two latent constructs, a latent construct and an error term, a latent construct and an indicator, or an indicator and an error term. Arrows between latent constructs represent causal path coefficients (also called regression weights or structural weights), i.e. the effects of one independent latent variable on a dependent latent variable. They make up the structural model in SEM. The small circles connected to all endogenous latent constructs (mediators and dependent variable) via an arrow are errors of prediction, revealing that the constructs’ variance is never fully explained by directly- and indirectly-related independent variables. The two arrows pointing to each manifest item show that its variance has two sources. One part is explained by the underlying latent construct, i.e. the proportion this item shares with the other items measuring the construct, and the other part is the variance which cannot be explained. Arrows that connect the indicators to their latent construct reflect the factor loadings, also named measurement weights. They make up the measurement model in SEM. The second kind of arrows comprises of double-headed, curved arrows. They indicate a nondirectional association between latent constructs, i.e. covariances.
Figure 6: Plain model for testing the attitude structure underlying support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe

Source: Own illustration depicted with Amos Graphics.
Thus the model presented in Figure 6 is a combination of the path diagram introduced in the theoretical part of this study (see Chapter 2.2.5) and the measurement model developed with the help of the EFA and the CFA. Specifying a structural equation model is always an evolutionary process (for detailed information about this process cf. e.g. Byrne 2001, Backhaus 2003, Schumacker/Lomax 2004). After developing an adequate measurement model, the causal structures are introduced. Furthermore, the model is amended by the latent constructs which can only be measured by one single item (in my case: national and EU democratic performance, and national and European identity). Compared to the CFA, the number of parameters to be estimated and the number of manifest indicators change, which in turn alters the degrees of freedom. Therefore, in a first step, it must be secured that the new full model is identified. If this is assured, the model can be calculated. If this calculation proceeds without problems, the interpretation can start.79

In the following paragraphs, I will present the results of the SEM for 2007. I use five imputed data sets from 2007 to calculate the SEM and combine the results according to Rubin’s rules (cf. Chapter 4.2). Moreover, all of the following SEM are based on imputed data sets as well.

First and foremost, one has to evaluate the model. There are several indices, like fit measures, modification indices, significance tests or standard errors, which can be consulted to evaluate the quality of the model and which indicate how to improve the model. Among these indices, the so-called fit measures give the first impression of how the model fits the data. The estimation of the above introduced model (which includes the already known causal paths and factor loadings) with the data from 2007 only reveals an acceptable fit of the model (RMSEA: 0.057; p-close: 0.000; GFI: 0.948; AGFI: 0.936). Furthermore the analysis of the path coefficients reveals that the path describing the direct effect from national identity on EU support is not statistically significant at the 5%-level (p>0.05), while all other paths are highly statistically significant (p<0.001). Additionally, the insignificant path from national identity to EU support shows no substantially meaningful effect, as the unstandardized coefficient is almost zero (0.005), while all other direct effects are larger than 0.1. This indicates a mis-specification of the model and, at least with this point, the model does not fit the data. However, as this path has been theoretically assumed, I consult the modification indices before deciding the consequences of the insignificance of this one effect.

79 Possible problems in SEM, which all characterize serious errors in the model specification, are negative definite matrices, standardized parameters greater than 1, or negative variances (Byrne 2001: 75).
Modification indices give suggestions as to what model modifications may be appropriate and useful, and what additional parameters should be introduced to improve a model if the fit measures indicate a bad or minimally acceptable fit. Such modifications should not be made only because of empirical suggestions of the statistical program; they must be made in accordance with theory as well. Modifications serve as interplays between data-driven suggestions and theoretical considerations.

In the model presented above, modification indices recommend possible improvements. The suggested additional parameters concern, among others, the covariances between the three performances of the nation-state, i.e. the model fit would be better if covariances are allowed between national generalized and national economic performance, between national generalized and national democratic performance, and national economic and national democratic performance. The same pattern of covariances is suggested between the three EU performances. All of these relations can be theoretically justified. It is plausible that the three dimensions of performance are connected to each other because they all deal with the evaluation of the procedural level in a democracy; they simply highlight different aspects of this procedural level. Therefore, it is likely that the evaluation of one performance dimension is not completely independent from the evaluation of another dimension. Covariances allow for these connections among the performances of the national and EU level, respectively. Even if all of these covariances are not equally strongly suggested, I introduce them all systematically for reasons of consistency; from a theoretical point of view, it would be arbitrary to add some of these covariances and leave out others. Overall, this modification of the original model is empirically suggested and theoretically plausible. The modified model has a close fit for the data set from 2007 (RMSEA: 0.049; p-close: 0.85; GFI: 0.962; AGFI: 0.952). Further modifications are suggested, e.g. covariances between items as in the case of the CFA models. However, I will not introduce further parameters that are not sufficiently secured by theory and may remain a bit arbitrary because the model now works well (cf. Footnote 75).

The introduction of the covariances has improved the fit of the model but these additional relations do not substantially change the regression weights of the structural model. As a consequence, the direct effect between national identity and EU support remains insignificant (p>0.05) and substantially meaningless (0.003). How can this finding be interpreted? As the empirical test has shown, this effect is not a part of the attitude structure underlying EU support. It has been theoretically suggested that citizens from Central and Eastern Europe who identify with their national community support the EU because they recognize that the EU helps to foster national interests. Bivariate correlations reveal this assumed positive relation, even though there are only weak associations (correla-
tion coefficient national identity and image of the EU: 0.12; national identity and membership in the EU: 0.10). However, if it is controlled for other theoretically postulated effects, the relation completely vanishes. This means that national identity has no independent direct effect on EU support when it is controlled for determinants that are directly related to the EU, like the EU performances. Hence, instrumental and normative aspects related to the EU and European identity are more relevant in explaining EU support than national identity. Like other national aspects serving as heuristics, national identity has only an indirect effect. Citizens in CEE do not transfer their national identity directly to support for or refusal of the EU; rather, national identity affects the existence of a European identity, which in turn influences EU support. Because the direct effect does not add to the explanation of EU support, I decide to delete this path even if this causal effect has been theoretically plausible. As the primary effect of the deleted path is almost zero, the deletion does not change the coefficients of other paths, as the non-existence of a path simply means a zero-correlation.80

The modified model – reduced by the direct path from national identity to EU support and extended by the six covariances – is depicted in Figure 7. This model consists of significant paths only and has a good model fit; therefore, it is suitable to use for answering the first research question on the determinants of EU support and to test the corresponding hypotheses empirically.

One last remark about the depiction of the SEM results: The modified plain model should illustrate the detailed model underlying my multivariate calculations. However, in the following chapters, I will depict a less detailed model that only includes the structural paths – the relations between the relevant latent constructs – in order to focus on the main interests of this study and to avoid a confusing and overloaded graphical output. Further relevant information, such as indirect effects, is summarized in tables. The factor loadings are not presented because I discussed them in detail when I presented the results of the CFA. There are no substantial differences between the factor loadings of the CFA and the factor loadings of the full SEM, i.e. the measurement model of the full SEM fits well. Therefore, further descriptions of the factor loadings would be redundant because they would simply be a repetition of the paragraphs on the CFA.

80 SEM makes it possible to test similar models with slightly different structural models and identical measurement models. When a model is calculated with direct effects from all four national attitudes to EU support, it turns out that three out of four paths are insignificant and substantially meaningless. Only the effect of national economic performance is significant (p<0.001) and has a weak substantial effect (0.15). Because this relationship is not theoretically backed up and it is possible to create statistical artifacts with SEM, I do not implement a new path. Overall, this test of a more complex structural model shows that, generally, national attitudes are not helpful in explaining EU support directly. However, the theoretically postulated indirect effects are supported by the data.
Figure 7: Modified plain model for testing the attitude structure underlying support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe

Source: Own illustration depicted with Amos Graphics.
Figure 8 shows the main results of the structural model of SEM for 2007. The estimates, drawn on the paths, are the regression weights measuring the causal structure between two latent constructs. I will analyze the findings in four systematic steps. These four steps mirror the order of the hypotheses. First, I analyze the direction of the specific EU attitudes; subsequently, I interpret the relative strength of these attitudes in explaining EU support. Afterwards, these two steps are repeated for the attitudes towards the national level.

Figure 8: Structural equation model representing the attitude structure underlying support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2007

Since the specific EU attitudes play a central role in the model as direct determinants of EU support on the one hand and as mediators for effects of national attitudes on EU support on the other, their influence is analyzed first. The relations between the specific EU attitudes and EU support are all statistically significant (p<0.001). They show the correct sign, namely positive, confirming the expectations of hypothesis 1, which states that all specific EU attitudes have a positive effect on generalized support for the EU. Regarding the attitudes towards the performances of the European system, the detected positive effects reveal that citizens, who evaluate the generalized, systemic, or democratic performance positively, support the EU in general, too. Inversely, citizens who view EU performances negatively reject the European regime. Thereby, the results confirm
Fuchs’ assumption that generalized attitudes towards the performance of a system determine generalized support for that system (Fuchs 2003: 32). Support for the EU depends on a positive evaluation of the performances of the EU. The influence of European identity on EU support is positive as well. Citizens, who affectively identify with the European community, support the system connected to this community. Therefore, the feeling of belonging to the imagined European community leads to a positive view on the EU itself, indicating that after three years of membership, citizens in CEE form an identity and relate this identity to the new system.

A closer look at the standardized path coefficients reveals that EU generalized and EU systemic performance influence EU support equally strong (standardized regression weights: 0.35 and 0.33, respectively). The effect of European identity is a bit weaker (0.23), followed by EU democratic performance (0.17) as the weakest predictor among the specific EU attitudes. Hypothesis 2, which states that EU performances are stronger predictors than European identity, is only partially confirmed. Two performance measures have a stronger effect, but EU democratic performance is outstripped by European identity. However, the difference in the relative strength of these two predictors is almost marginal. This finding indicates that the democratic dimension of the EU is secondary for citizens’ evaluation of the EU regime. The comparatively strong effect of European identity is not expected in this early phase of membership. It is assumed that the development of European identity’s effect on support needs more time because affective involvement develops more slowly than cognitive-evaluative opinions (Duchesne/Frognier 1995: 198, Citrin/Sides 2004: 168-170). However, because EU generalized and EU systemic performance clearly show the strongest effects, this can be interpreted as such: instrumental thinking dominates the general evaluation of the EU regime instead of value-based or affective considerations.

Hypothesis 3 deals with the fact that European integration was and still is a project helping to improve the economy and security on the European continent. It is assumed that systemic performance, which covers the evaluation of the outputs and outcomes of various political actions, has the strongest effect on EU support because citizens most likely connect the EU regime with efforts to improve living conditions in general. The importance of this predictor is supported empirically as it exerts one of the two strongest effects. However, the effect of EU generalized performance is as strong as the effect of EU systemic performance, which means that the more abstract, actor-related dimension of performance is of equal importance in explaining EU support as the evaluation of a set of concrete actions taken by EU authorities. It seems that Central and Eastern Europeans link the success of the European regime to the political actors working on the European level. The standing of and trust in these actors is generalized and directly transported to the whole system. I do not want to anticipate too
much but the comparison of the explanatory power of the predictors of EU support over time will show that this is a newer development. Until 2007, EU systemic performance has always been, by far, the strongest predictor, which means that generally the political outputs on the European level are dominant in the attitude structure of CEE citizens because the citizens are first and foremost interested in economic or social benefits from the EU for themselves or for their country.

In the next step, I analyze the influence of national attitudes in the model. Thereby, I empirically prove whether these national determinants affect their equivalent specific EU attitudes and whether they also contribute to explaining EU support. First of all, all modeled performances of the nation-state have a strong positive effect on their equivalent specific EU performances. This is consistent with the idea that the easily accessible evaluations of national performances are used as judgmental shortcuts to evaluate the performances of the EU. Generalized evaluations of national political institutions determine the evaluation of European institutions. Additionally, citizens transfer information about the economic performance of the nation-state to the systemic performance of the EU, and attitudes towards the functioning of the national democracy affect the attitudes towards the democratic functioning of the European system. This is in accordance with the theoretical considerations about opinion formation towards European objects. Because of the remoteness of the EU and the complexity of this multi-level system, it seems to be implausible that citizens generate completely independent views on these concrete European aspects. Therefore, they rely on available and representative heuristics to some extent. The good model fit and, particularly, the statistically significant, strong, and positive path coefficients, indicate that the empirical attitude structure of CEE citizens reflects the theoretically assumed structure. Hence, one aspect of hypothesis 4 is proven: Performances of the nation-state have a positive effect on the equivalent performances of the EU.

I must also determine whether the identified positive relations – from the national performances to the EU performances and from the EU performances to EU support – are reflected in a significantly positive effect of the national performances on EU support. More technically speaking, is there an indirect influence of national attitudes on EU support mediated through specific EU attitudes? To interpret these indirect effects, additional analyses with Amos are necessary. Although the conventional ADF estimation method delivers the estimates for indirect effects in a model including mediation effects (it is simply the product of the two direct effects involved), it does not give statistical significances.

A frequently used calculation for the significance of mediation effects is the Sobel test. This approach can easily be applied because only the unstandardized path coefficients from $X_1$ to $X_2$ and $X_2$ to $Y$, and the standard errors of these path
coefficients are needed (Sobel 1982, Urban/Mayerl 2008: 306-307). However, simulation studies have shown that this test is not reliable under special circumstances; for example, if it is applied to data of non-normal distribution, if the sample size is small, or if the mediated effect is small (Cheung/Lau 2008). As the first and the third problem occur in my analyses, I decide to apply another approach even if my sample sizes might be large enough to overlook the other presumptions of the Sobel test. The method, that fits best in my case is bootstrapping in its bias-corrected (BC) version. This method, which does not assume normal distribution, works sufficiently in large samples with small mediation effects (Cheung/Lau 2008, Shrout/Bolger 2002). The BC bootstrap method is implemented in Amos and it is possible to obtain approximate standard errors for every estimate calculated with Amos including indirect effects. In addition to the standard error, one gets bootstrap confidence intervals and a two tailed significance test, which facilitate interpretation (Arbuckle 2008a: 431).

Table 4 summarizes the information about the indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support. Let me concentrate on the effects concerning national performances first. These effects are rather small, but they are all positive and statistically significant. Each lower bound of the stated 95% confidence interval is larger than zero, which is another indicator that the indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support exist, and the assumed mediation – with specific EU attitudes as the mediators – occurs for all three causal chains representing the attitude structure concerning performances on both political levels and EU support. To summarize this finding regarding hypothesis 4: National performances – mediated through EU performances – are positively related to EU support. This indicates that the national and the European system are evaluated together, and national attitudes serve as shortcuts when evaluating the EU in general. Therefore, according to the theoretical assumptions, the political systems do not compete with each other over citizens’ support. In fact, they are simultaneously evaluated either positively or negatively. If the nation-state’s outputs are seen positively, the EU’s performance is evaluated positively as well, and this in turn leads to an

81 Bootstrapping is a computer-based method used to estimate properties of a parameter (e.g. its standard error). This method generates a set of new data sets (so-called bootstrap samples) by random sampling with replacement from the original data set. For each bootstrap sample, the required parameter is estimated. Its properties, like the standard deviation of these sample parameters, can be calculated (the result is called bootstrap-estimated standard error). If the number of samples is large (e.g. 1000), a normal distribution for the parameters is assumed and confidence intervals can be computed (Shrout/Bolger 2002: 426-429).

82 To clarify my application of bootstrapping: As my sample size is large enough to rely on the estimates and standard errors computed with the ordinary ADF estimation, I only use the bootstrap method to test the significance of the indirect effects in my model.
overall support for the remote European regime. If citizens are not satisfied with the performances of the nation-state, this dissatisfaction is transferred to the European level, which results in a negative evaluation of EU performances and the rejection of the whole supranational system.

Table 4: Indirect effects of national attitudes on support for the EU, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Indirect effects</th>
<th>Bootstrap S.E.</th>
<th>Confidence intervals (BC)</th>
<th>Two tailed significance (BC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td>0.08 (0.07)</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.07 0.11</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>0.09 (0.11)</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.06 0.12</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
<td>0.04 (0.07)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.03 0.05</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td>0.04 (0.05)</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.03 0.04</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8273. Unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients in parentheses. 95% confidence intervals. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Can similar things be said about the influence of national identity on European identity and EU support? First, the direct effect of national identity on European identity is statistically significant and positive (unstandardized estimate: 0.29). This means that the two identities go together, and identification with the national community and more remote European community can coexist as multiple identities. As social identity theory postulates, these two identities are not in conflict and the existence of a national identity does not exclude a European identity; they are rather hierarchically organized and can exist simultaneously (Duchesne/Frognier 1995, Marks 1999, Westle 2003b, Castano 2004, Citrin/Sides 2004). The indirect effect of national identity on EU support is significant and positive, but substantially very weak (unstandardized estimate: 0.04). Nevertheless, hypothesis 5b is confirmed. National identity has a positive effect on European identity, and the latter mediates its influence on EU support which is slightly positive as well. In contrast, hypothesis 5a is not confirmed. As has been shown above, national identity has no independent direct influence on EU support. Overall, the attitude towards the national community is a part of the attitude structure underlying EU support, but its position resembles the other national attitudes because the affective attitude is only indirectly connected to the very general concept of EU support.
The analyses show that all presumed shortcuts are used by citizens evaluating the EU. A related question asks what shortcut is the most influential with regard to support for the EU. The relative relevance of a shortcut statistically depends on two things: firstly, the strength of the relation between the shortcut, i.e. the national attitude and its equivalent EU attitude. This relationship is very important because it reveals whether an easily accessible national attitude is used as a shortcut to evaluate a specific EU attitude, which is in some way related to this shortcut. Secondly, the shortcut unfolds its influence if the relation between the specific EU attitude and EU support is strong because the shortcut’s effect on EU support is fully mediated through the specific EU attitude.

Following cognitive psychological theory, I have postulated that the modeled national attitudes should serve as meaningful shortcuts. Therefore, strong positive relations between all national attitudes and their equivalent specific EU attitudes should be expected. No differences are assumed regarding the relative relevance because all shortcuts are seen as plausible and important. Nevertheless, the empirical analysis reveals differences (see Figure 8). National economic and national democratic performance clearly show the strongest effects on their European equivalents. This can be interpreted as a left-over or implication from the beginning of the relationship between the EU and Central and Eastern Europeans when the EU was seen as a political actor helping to stabilize democracy and market economies in the transformation states. The strong connection of both political systems regarding these aspects is still on the people’s minds. Since the effect of national generalized performance is slightly weaker, the comparison of these three direct paths cautiously point to a stronger overall effect of the two aforementioned shortcuts, national economic and democratic performance. But as has been stated earlier, the difference in the relative strength of the influence of shortcuts on EU support is more likely to be due to differences in the strength of the effects of specific EU attitudes on EU support. The analyses comparing the influences of specific EU attitudes on EU support has revealed stronger effects of EU generalized and EU systemic performance, and a slightly weaker effect of EU democratic performance. If these findings are combined, one may conclude that the shortcut, national economic performance, is the most influential. Indeed, even if the differences between the indirect effects are small, the effect of national economic performance is the strongest among them (see Table 4), meaning that the importance of the economic dimension of the EU is obvious in this indirect effect, thereby confirming hypothesis 6.

In contrast, compared to the shortcuts, national identity is the least influential determinant of EU support because the two direct paths – from national identity to European identity and from the latter to EU support – are among the weakest in the model. The lower influence of this affective attitude is especially due to the weak effect of European identity on EU support. The influence of national
identity on EU support may increase if European identity further develops, and
identity is increasingly transferred to the European system; nevertheless, in 2007,
the influence of national identity is still lower than the influence of any other at-
titude towards the nation-state. However, I want to emphasize again that the dif-
ferences between the indirect effects are only marginal, with almost no differ-
ences in the influence of various national attitudes. The development of the ef-
fects of these attitudes over time will reveal whether such balanced effects can be
found in the entire time period studied or whether it is a newer phenomenon.

Besides the relations presented thus far, the analysis shows that the model ex-
plains 41 percent of the total variance of generalized support for the EU. Togeth-
er with the good fit of the model explained earlier, the model of support for the
EU satisfactorily explains the dependent variable, and adequately reflects the at-
titude structure of citizens in CEE that is underlying EU support. The evidence is
consistent with the argument that the opinion formation process concerning EU
support proceeds in a causal chain. It starts with forming an opinion about a na-
tional aspect. This opinion is transferred to an equivalent European aspect, which
in turn is generalized and leads to support for or refusal of the EU regime. There-
fore, the generalized evaluation of the EU is founded on attitudes towards the na-
tion-state. The citizens recognize the connection between these two political lev-
els within a multi-level system; because the higher layer is too complex and too
remote, easily accessible attitudes towards the well-known nation-state must be
used to form opinions about the rather unknown EU. This process is not arbi-
trary. Citizens can distinguish between different aspects of the national and the
European level as shown in the factor analyses. When evaluating specific EU at-
titudes, they select a shortcut from the variety of national attitudes that is related
to the aspect to be evaluated.

All in all, the analyses confirm that attitudes towards EU generalized, system-
ic, and democratic performance, as well as identification with the European
community explain generalized EU support in CEE. Moreover, national attitudes
towards these performance aspects serve as cognitive heuristics. In the first
place, national attitudes are judgmental shortcuts that help to form opinions
about equivalent specific EU attitudes, but mediated through these specific EU
attitudes, they also contribute to explaining EU support. In addition, national
identity, combined with European identity in a multiple identity, makes up a de-
terminant of EU support.
4.5.3 Development of the attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

In the theoretical discussion, I argued that the attitude structure underlying EU support changes as experience with the EU increases. This is especially true for the use and relevance of cognitive heuristics. I expect linear, steady changes in the relevance of different attitudes making up this attitude structure. In the course of time, some determinants will become more important while others are expected to lose explanatory power. In this chapter, I will show whether the assumed changes occur empirically. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is to describe the attitude structure in the Central and Eastern European context in the period around the accession. It should answer the second main research question of this study: Does the relevance of single determinants of generalized support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe – and the relevance of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in particular – change in the course of time? Or more precisely: Are there differences concerning the explanatory power of single determinants – and of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in particular – shortly before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and after years of EU membership?

This research question is answered by comparing structural equation models for each of the relevant points in time. Technically, this comparison is done by a multiple group comparison. As has been mentioned earlier, the four points in time (Fall 2003, Fall 2004, Spring 2006, and Fall 2007) are treated as four groups with ‘time’ constituting the moderator variable that distinguishes between the groups. In this respect, I assume that ‘time’ conditions the path coefficients within the model of support. Depending on the point in time analyzed, the path coefficients in the model may differ in strength. By comparing the four models based on data from different points in time, possible developments and changes in the attitude structure underlying EU support can be observed. As I am only interested in the attitude structure, I focus on comparing factor loadings and path coefficients between the four groups. It is possible to use the multiple group approach for comparing other parameters, like latent means, but I narrow the description of the method to the features that I need for my analyses (for further information on multiple group analyses see e.g. Byrne 2001: 173-264, 2004, Frazier et al. 2004, Arbuckle 2008a: 377-384). In the following paragraphs, I will describe my strategy for comparing the attitude structure in the period around the accession in more detail, before I elaborate on the results and interpretation of these results.

A simultaneous multiple group analysis makes it possible to examine and compare the measurement model and the structural model of a full SEM in two or more groups. First of all, for each group (in my case: for each point in time), a
baseline model is specified. It is possible to implement slight differences in the measurement or structural models for each group if there are theoretical reasons or empirical reasons coming from the results of a CFA or SEM (Heyder/Schmidt 2003, Byrne 2004, Davidov et al. 2008).

I do not assume any differences in the measurement model from a theoretical point of view, i.e. I assume that the same items adequately measure their latent constructs at all points in time. This assumption is supported empirically. When calculating each of the four models separately, all factor loadings are statistically significant (p<0.001) and of a comparable strength. However, because the similarity of factor loadings is an important precondition for interpreting moderation effects, this assumption can be tested again in the simultaneous multiple group analysis.

Regarding the structural model, the specification is not straightforward. Theoretically, I do not expect different path models in the different years under investigation because I assume an identical attitude structure is underlying EU support in the time around the accession. The only thing that I assume is different is the strength of the existent paths.

However, the theoretically assumed attitude structure was challenged by the 2007 empirical data, which showed that national identity had no direct influence on EU support. The model has been modified through the deletion of this path, and this modified model now fits well. So it is assumed that this modified model can adequately depict the attitude structure underlying EU support in CEE after EU accession. Hence, when specifying the baseline model for the time comparison, it is necessary to discover how this path behaves during the other points in time. Of course, while checking for this specific path, the other paths must be inspected as well. To test the behavior of the paths, two different path models – one model with the direct path between national identity and EU support and one model without this path – are calculated for each year separately.

When interpreting the models including the additional direct path, it turns out that in 2003 and 2006 the effect of national identity on EU support is statistically significant at the 5%-level. In 2004, the effect is statistically significant at the 10%-level only. However, all other direct effects in the models reach a higher level of significance (p<0.001) every year, showing a difference in their quality. Moreover, the effects of the respective path are almost zero at all times, never reaching a coefficient as large as 0.1. A comparison of the fit measure reveals that both models have a good fit in all three years. Taking all things together, I decide to take into account only effects that are statistically significant at the 0.1%-level. This means that I leave out the respective path, and assume the direct relation between national identity and EU support to be zero during the whole period under investigation. It follows that the latent constructs are connected in the same way at all points in time analyzed. The baseline models for the four
points in time are identical and correspond to the model I presented in Figure 7. Table 5 shows the model fit from separate calculations of each model for the four points in time, revealing a good fit for each model. Even though Amos suggests minor modifications, for reasons of parsimony and consistency, I do not introduce additional paths. Hence, the baseline model for the multiple group comparison is found.

Table 5: Model fit from separate tests for four points in time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>P-close</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>0.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.974</td>
<td>0.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.997</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>0.961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>0.962</td>
<td>0.952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. For each year all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

After specifying the baseline models for all groups, the models can be tested simultaneously. This test can reveal if the four models are significantly different with regard to various parameters in which the researcher is interested. With this approach, several models with different underlying assumptions are calculated. These models differ in their assumptions as to which parameters are constrained and which parameters are freely estimated. In the first model, the unconstrained model, all parameters (e.g. factor loadings, path coefficients) are set freely; they all can vary between the four groups, i.e. between the points in time. In the second model, the measurement weights model, factor loadings are set to be equal across all groups. This model tests whether the measurement of the latent constructs by manifest items works similarly in all groups. The third model, called structural weights model, constrains the path coefficients and the factor loadings. This model checks whether these two kinds of parameters are equal across the groups. In the multiple group comparison, the different models are tested against each other for all groups simultaneously. With the help of model fit indices, one can then decide which model fits the data best (Byrne 2004). If the structural weights model imposing equality constraints for path coefficients has a

83 These models must not be mistaken for the four baseline models established for the four points in time.
84 Amos provides three further models which constrain more and more parameters. These further constraints are not relevant for my study; hence, I do not discuss them. For more information about these models see Arbuckle (2008a: 380), Byrne (2004).
worse fit than the measurement weights model, which allows path coefficients to differ between groups, a moderator effect may be at hand (Hayes 2009: 416).

For the multiple group comparison, I allow for the path coefficients to differ across groups, i.e. across different points in time. Time may be a moderator that influences the strength of the existing path coefficients in the model and the strength of the path coefficients related to national attitudes serving as shortcuts in particular. In the first step, I analyze which model fits best; specifically, I analyze if the assumptions – factor loadings are similar across groups and path coefficients vary across groups – hold because this is the starting point to analyze a possible moderator effect. The path coefficients are then compared across different points in time to assess the hypotheses formulated in chapter 2.3. When interpreting the results, special emphasis is drawn on paths measuring the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and EU support. As multiple group analyses are based on covariance matrices, unstandardized parameters must be used for interpreting the results (Bollen 1989, Heyder/Schmidt 2003: 205).

When analyzing the fit measure of various models with differing constraints estimated as multiple group models, the RMSEA, which I normally use to indicate the model fit, is not practical. Instead, one has to rely on the χ²-difference test, also implemented in Amos. This test compares the ratio of χ² and degrees of freedom (df) between the different models varying in the constraints, and the model with the lowest ratio holds. This fit measure indicates that the measurement weights model (χ²/df = 18.9) fits the data better than the unconstrained model (χ²/df = 19.1) and the structural weights model (χ²/df = 19.5). Hence, I assume similar factor loadings and different path coefficients across the points in time.85 The overall fit of the measurement weights model, which is interpreted in the following paragraphs, is good (see Table 6). For estimating the model fit, the RMSEA can be used again, like in ordinary models. However, the model fit is calculated on the basis of all data sets included in the multiple group comparison. Therefore, only one RMSEA is given for the overall model fit; no separate fit indices for each point are estimated.

The comparison of changes in the influence of different determinants on EU support over time is structured as follows: First, I consider the direction of the in-

85 In addition, I check to see if the factor loadings are the same across all groups because this is a presumption for interpreting the structure between latent constructs. If the factor loadings are similar, the latent constructs mean the same to all groups. In the Amos output, the critical ratios (estimates divided by their standard errors) for differences between parameters reveal that not all, but most, of the indicators are invariant over time. Because there are only a few items that are not equal across the points in time, it is possible to leave them in the model because it is secured by the other items that the overall measurement of the latent constructs is similar.
fluence of all determinants, then I briefly discuss the development of the effects of the specific EU attitudes on support; finally I intensively concern myself with the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and on EU support.

Table 6: Model fit of the multiple group comparison of four points in time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>P-close</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>0.962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. For each year all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Table 7 lists the unstandardized path coefficients for the four points in time that I want to compare. These coefficients can be interpreted line-by-line to analyze temporal changes of influence of every single determinant on EU support. First of all, all estimates are statistically significant. They all have a positive sign, i.e. the assumed direction. The positive relation of specific EU attitudes and EU support is theoretically expected because of the role of these determinants in Fuchs’ general model of regime support. During the whole period, the influence of perceptions of EU political performances on support for the EU regime is given. The same is true for the influence of European identity on EU support. Thus, the basics of Fuchs’ general model of regime support are confirmed for the EU in the period around the eastward enlargement. The constantly positive relations between specific EU attitudes and EU support correspond to one of the prerequisites for assuming that national attitudes serve as shortcuts, which indirectly affect EU support.

The positive relations of national performances to their EU equivalents indicate that these national attitudes are used as shortcuts during the whole period under investigation. Central and Eastern European citizens evaluate the two political systems simultaneously, either positively or negatively before the accession and after becoming members of the EU. This has been expected especially since the analysis of 2007 has revealed that the political systems were evaluated in parallel even three years after the accession. This common evaluation is even more plausible for the earlier years. Ordinary citizens relied on various national aspects when evaluating the then very distant EU with which they had no experience.

As the effects of national attitudes on EU support are fully mediated through specific EU attitudes, the changes of the direct relationship between these EU attitudes and EU support over time are analyzed first because these changes have consequences for the changes in the effects of national attitudes on EU support. I presume a different temporal development of the influences of different specific
EU attitudes on EU support: the effect of EU systemic performance is expected to decrease when experience with the EU increases because more and more dimensions of the EU, like liberty, equality, EU citizenship, or European symbols, become obvious. Indeed, the comparison of the effect of EU systemic performance on support confirms this assumption: the effect decreases steadily from 2003 to 2007 (from an unstandardized estimate of 0.48 to 0.34) supporting hypothesis 8.

Table 7: Changes in the attitude structure underlying EU support in Central and Eastern Europe over time, 2003-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>EU systemic performance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>European identity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
<td>0.03*</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. Unstandardized path coefficients from the measurement weights model of the multiple group comparison. Level of significance: * p<0.01, ** p<0.001, bootstrapped significances for indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support. For each year all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Regarding EU generalized and democratic performance no clear trends are found. The influence of European identity is expected to increase over time be-
cause the transference of the identification with the European community to the EU itself needs time to develop. The data also confirm this hypothesis (hypothesis 9). The effect of European identity increases slightly but steadily (from 0.06 to 0.12) between 2003 and 2007.

As the prerequisite for the effect of shortcuts on EU support is fulfilled for all points in time, I will now discuss the effects of national attitudes in detail. First, the development of the direct influence of the shortcuts on their specific EU attitudes is analyzed. The development of the effects of the three performances shows the same pattern for all three. From the starting point in 2003, the strength of each relation increases and reaches its peak in 2004. Then, each relation decreases steadily and reaches the lowest influence of shortcuts on their equivalent EU attitudes in 2007. This pattern clearly shows that shortcuts are used less by citizens as their experience with the EU increases (see Table 7). This is fully in accordance with hypothesis 10a, which states that the influence of every single national attitude on its equivalent specific EU attitude decreases over time.

However, it is remarkable that the influence of shortcuts did not decrease steadily. In 2004, citizens relied more on shortcuts to evaluate EU performances than in 2003. The unexpected weak effects of national performances on EU performances in 2003 can be explained by the political environment at that time. From March to September 2003, all CEE candidate countries held referendums on EU membership. Voter turnout in these referendums was rather high (on average: 51.1 percent; varying from 45.6 percent in Hungary to 72.5 percent in Latvia (Gallup Europe 2007)), which leads to the conclusion that the remoteness of the EU was reduced for a short time in 2003 as the referendums and related campaigns increased awareness and interest in the EU. Therefore, the EU might have been more prominent in the minds of citizens in 2003 than in 2004. Arguably, the EP elections in 2004 should have led to a similar effect. However, the empirical results reveal that the effects of national heuristics on specific EU attitudes were the strongest in 2004. This means that the campaign and EP elections did not compensate for the missing experience with the EU, and shortcuts were immanently important for evaluating the EU. The low turnout in the 2004 EP elections (on average: 25.1 percent; varying from 17 percent in Slovakia to 48.4 percent in Lithuania (Secretariat of the European Parliament 2004)) reveals that this event did not cause high awareness and high interest in European aspects. Under such circumstances, heuristics are important and necessary especially because experience is lacking. The weaker influence of shortcuts in 2003 can be explained by the referendums-effect. As this special attention vanished, the EU reverted to the remote and distant object, and citizens once again relied more on shortcuts.

The analyses presented here have revealed that changes occur in almost all direct paths depicted in the model of EU support. This must have consequences for
the indirect effects of national attitudes serving as heuristics. The analysis for 2007 has shown that shortcuts have a weak but significant positive influence on EU support. Comparison over time confirms that significant positive relationships exist during the relevant time period regarding all national attitudes. Furthermore, in line with my theoretical assumptions, shortcuts have been shown to be more important before the accession and shortly afterwards; between 2003 and 2007, the influence of national performances on EU support tends to decrease on a low level.

Overall, hypothesis 10b, which states that the influence of every single national attitude on generalized support for the EU decreases over a period of time, can be confirmed for the national performances. These shortcuts lose their influence on EU support as the direct paths from the national performances to EU performances tend to decrease in strength over time while the influences of the EU performances on EU support do not compensate for the other given reductions of influence.

The temporal development of the relations between national identity, European identity, and EU support proceeds differently. The influence of national identity on European identity decreases continuously. Moreover, the influence dropped drastically in the period from 2003 to 2007 (see Table 7). Before the accession, identification with the national community promoted the identification with the more remote European community. Over time, its influence diminished as citizens learn more about the European community. Then a more independent feeling of belonging developed, especially after citizens learned more about the characteristics and values which make up the European community. With the increasing awareness of the European community, more complex identity patterns were possible. Over time, European identity split from national identity and both identifications became more and more independent from each other. But still, the two identities often go together because there is still a positive relationship between them at the end of the period analyzed. The difference before and after the accession only concerns the strength of the relationship and not the direction. National and European identity have never been in concurrence in CEE, neither before the accession, shortly after the accession, nor during the first years of EU membership.

The indirect effect of national identity on EU support remains stable on a very low level as postulated in hypothesis 11. This stability occurs because of the diametrically opposed trends of the two direct paths, which commonly form the indirect effect. The path coefficient reflecting the influence of national identity on European identity decreases steadily, while the coefficient representing the influence of European identity on EU support increases steadily; as the indirect effect is simply the product of the two direct effects, a stable indirect effect ensues.
The findings concerning the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes are confirmed by another statistical parameter. Amos provides us with the explained variances of each latent endogenous construct in the model. These parameters indicate the variance of latent constructs reflecting European attitudes explained by latent constructs measuring national attitudes. Table 8 summarizes the decrease of the explained variances of each specific European attitudinal construct. As the variances depend on the strength of the path coefficients pointing to each endogenous latent construct, the explained variances follow the same patterns as the path coefficients between national and specific European attitudes. The data from 2003 and 2007 reveal that national attitudes gradually lose their explanatory power for the European attitudes, and the proportion of the explained variance of each endogenous latent construct reflecting European performances or European identity decreases.

Table 8: Explained variance of endogenous latent constructs in the model of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003-2007 (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific EU attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU identity</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. Explained variances from the measurement weights model of the multiple group comparison. For each year all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

In addition to changes in the explained variance of specific EU attitudes, the explanatory power of the whole model of generalized support for the EU changes over time as well. The explained variance of the endogenous latent construct, EU support (resembles the R² in a regression analysis), gradually decreases from 64 percent in 2003 to 42 percent in 2007. This corresponds with the decrease of the strength of the path coefficients in the model over time. The higher explained variance of the dependent variable in earlier years can be explained by the citizens’ limited ability to separate EU support from the other concepts in the model. Over time the citizens’ ability to separate these constructs increases as experience with European aspects grows, leading to a better organized but more complex attitude structure. To summarize, the concepts in the model are more intertwined in the citizens’ attitude structure in the early years, but increasing experience within the EU leads to more structured attitudes, meaning that citizens can...
better differentiate between EU support and the various concepts underlying EU support.

The reported unstandardized estimates do not tell us anything about the relative effects of specific EU attitudes at various points in time. Therefore, a short summary of the most important developments is given because the detailed analysis of 2007 showed two unexpected findings: first, the expected dominance of EU systemic performance as the strongest determinant could not be confirmed and second, the relative influence of European identity on EU support was unexpectedly high. A separate comparison of the relative influence of different EU attitudes for each point is drawn with the help of standardized parameters. For each point in time a separate model is estimated. In these models, each parameter is freely estimated; thus, they are unconstrained models. This is necessary because a multiple group comparison does not allow for a comparison of standardized estimates (Heyder/Schmidt 2003: 205). Therefore, each model is interpreted separately and the differences between the models are not subject to a statistical significance test. The analysis of the relative influences is limited to a descriptive analysis.

Comparing the model estimates from 2003 to 2006 with the 2007 model supports an earlier assumption: the relative influence of different specific EU attitudes on EU support observed in 2007 reflects a newer development (see Table 9). In former years, EU systemic performance was dominant compared to other specific EU attitudes. This is in accordance with the assumption that, generally, instrumental thinking about Europe and its political outputs is dominant in the opinion formation process of citizens from CEE in the period around the accession. In addition, the fairly high relative influence of European identity on support is a newer development as well. In earlier years, this affective attitude was always the least influential among the specific EU attitudes (in 2003, it was clearly less influential; in 2004 and 2006, EU democratic performance had an almost similar effect). This confirms the assumption that identity needs time to develop and to unfold its impact on support as the connection between a European community and support for the related regime must first be affectively established. The steady increase of its influence over time – as the comparison of unstandardized estimates show – is another hint in this direction.

The comparison of the relative influence of cognitive heuristics at four different points in time show that their direct effects on specific EU attitudes are very strong at all times. One aspect is remarkable, however: national democratic performance is continuously the most influential predictor. As has been explained when interpreting the results from 2007, this is a sign that the important and
positively assessed role of the EU in the democratization process is constantly reflected in the attitude structure of CEE citizens.\textsuperscript{86}

Table 9: Relative strength of the effects in the model of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe for each point in time, 2003-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td>(\rightarrow) EU support</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>(\rightarrow) EU support</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td>(\rightarrow) EU support</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European identity</td>
<td>(\rightarrow) EU support</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| National generalized performance  | \(\rightarrow\) EU generalized performance | 0.26    | 0.31    | 0.30    | 0.20    |
| National economic performance     | \(\rightarrow\) EU systemic performance | 0.43    | 0.54    | 0.47    | 0.33    |
| National democratic performance   | \(\rightarrow\) EU democratic performance | 0.52    | 0.60    | 0.54    | 0.39    |
| National identity                 | \(\rightarrow\) European identity | 0.50    | 0.34    | 0.25    | 0.23    |

| National generalized performance  | \(\rightarrow\) EU support | 0.08    | 0.09    | 0.09    | 0.07    |
| National economic performance     | \(\rightarrow\) EU support | 0.21    | 0.24    | 0.18    | 0.11    |
| National democratic performance   | \(\rightarrow\) EU support | 0.12    | 0.10    | 0.10    | 0.07    |
| National identity                 | \(\rightarrow\) EU support | 0.05    | 0.05    | 0.04    | 0.05    |

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. Standardized path coefficients from separate models for each year. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

The comparatively high influence of national democratic performance could be due to the measurement instrument, too. This construct and the equivalent EU attitude are each measured by a sole item, where no error is assumed. Moreover, these two constructs are measured by identical questions, each pointing to one of the political systems. But the relationship could not have occurred only because of the measurement since national identity and European identity were measured in the same way too, but they were not always strongly related.
Regarding the indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support, the outstanding position of national economic performance during the whole period is noticeable. Although this effect is the relative strongest effect among the national predictors in 2007, its dominant position is more obvious between 2003 and 2006. Its position as the relative strongest effect among the shortcuts is due to the fact that the direct path of national economic performance on its European counterpart is among the strongest in every year, and the direct path of the latter to EU support is the relative strongest on this level in every year but 2007. This supports the conclusion drawn above, namely that the economic dimension is very important in the attitude structure, and attitudes towards this aspect are central when forming opinions about political regimes – no matter what level is addressed.

This short descriptive comparison of the relative influence of different predictors supports the findings from the extensive analysis of the attitude structure underlying EU support in 2007 and from the development of the attitude structure in the period around the accession. It makes clear that the main hypotheses formulated for the model of EU support in CEE in general are confirmed, not only by the data from 2007 but for all points in time analyzed. Therefore, the presumed attitude structure of citizens from new EU member states appears before the accession, shortly after the accession, and after years of membership.

Back to the most relevant aspect of this chapter: What have we learnt about the role of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in the period around the accession? Firstly, before the accession, in the year of the EU membership referendums, citizens used these shortcuts, but they were not as essential as one year later when the awareness of the EU, which had increased during the referendum campaigns, died away. Secondly, in 2004, in the first year as European citizens, Central and Eastern Europeans relied heavily on shortcuts when evaluating the EU. They had almost no experience as members of the EU and no special event (neither the celebrations around the enlargement nor the EP elections) brought European aspects into people’s memories. In the following years, the relevance of heuristics decreased as experience within the EU increased and the EU became a part of people’s daily lives, which made more independent evaluations possible. Nevertheless, even at the end of the period under investigation, i.e. three years after the eastward enlargement, shortcuts coming from the national political sphere are still used and necessary. Central and Eastern Europeans rely on national attitudes as heuristics when generating equivalent specific EU attitudes or the overall support for the remote and complex EU.
The aim of this chapter is to test the moderator effect of political sophistication on support for the EU and the attitude structure underlying EU support. To test whether the heterogeneity of citizens in terms of their political sophistication leads to differences in the level of EU support and the use of heuristics when evaluating the EU, I differentiate citizens by their level of political sophistication. Technically speaking, I create a group characterized by little sophistication and a group characterized by high sophistication. To separate less from more sophisticated persons, I use factual knowledge because it is regarded as the most appropriate measurement method for political sophistication. Each Eurobarometer data set contains a number of quiz questions, and citizens who correctly answer a certain number of these questions can be seen as sophisticated while citizens who fail to correctly answer a certain number of quiz questions are a part of the low sophistication group. Then I descriptively show the differences between these two groups with regards to their level of EU support. In the second step, the two groups are used to calculate a multiple group comparison in Amos to test the moderating effect of political sophistication on the influences specified in the path model underlying EU support. The empirical results drawn from the measures are described and interpreted to answer the following research question: whether the influence of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics on EU support in Central and Eastern Europe varies depending on the citizens’ level of political sophistication.

The Eurobarometer data sets that I use include quiz questions to test citizens’ factual knowledge of the EU. These quizzes differ from survey to survey. The questions, the number of questions and their nature (open or close-ended, number of answer categories) can vary. This would make a comparison of levels of

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87 I decided to separate the total population into two knowledge groups to pursue my aim of testing differences in EU support and the underlying attitude structure between less and more sophisticated persons. However, I am aware that some authors assume a non-linear relationship between sophistication and political attitudes (a point made most prominent by Zaller (1992: 19-20)). Such non-linearity cannot be identified with my design. Therefore, I checked to see whether the relation between the level of sophistication and the level of support is linear, which is the case at all points in time under investigation. Furthermore, I examined whether the bivariate correlations between national attitudes serving as shortcuts and the specific EU attitudes show a linear pattern. This pattern occurs; the correlations are stronger the lower the level of sophistication. Additionally, this is in accordance with the findings of Sinnott who shows linearity between knowledge and EU support, as well as between knowledge and the consistency of the attitude structure concerning EU policies (1997, 2000). Hence, the comparison of two knowledge groups is meaningful and appropriate.
political sophistication over time very difficult. However, I only need these knowledge questions to form two knowledge groups in each survey and I am not interested in a cross-survey comparison of political sophistication. Therefore, the quizzes are functional for my study.

Most quiz questions follow the same pattern. They are formulated as statements and the respondents have to decide whether the statements are true or false. The questions are close-ended and only two answers are possible. As Delli Carpini and Keeter, as well as Mondak explain, even such questions are suitable to measure political knowledge (Delli Carpini/Keeter 1993: 1191, Mondak 2001).

Table 10 lists the various questions asked in each of the four data sets. Every quiz starts with the introduction: “For each of the following statements about the European Union could you please tell me whether you think it is true or false?”. Then three to nine statements follow. Each statement concerns the EU, its institutions, symbols, or policies. The two possible answers are ‘true’ and ‘false’. ‘Don’t know’ is not a default answer but, of course, it is a possible and frequently used option.

When reading the list of questions, it becomes obvious that there is only one question about the election of EP members which is asked every year. All other statements differ more or less in their wording, their content, and their difficulty. Moreover, the number of quiz questions and the share of ‘true’ statements differ from one data set to another.

88 There is one quiz question asked in an identical wording in all the studies that I use. Therefore, with this single question, I can compare if the level of sophistication has increased in CEE or not. The question asks whether the members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the European Union. The proportion of citizens who answered this question correctly was 37.4 percent in 2003 and 51.2 percent in 2007. This means that with regard to this simple measure, it can be argued that the level of sophistication has increased. This is in accordance with my theoretical assumptions: increasing experience with the EU leads to increased awareness of European aspects.

89 In the four data sets, all but four quiz questions follow the pattern that I have described. In 2004, one question with six potential answers was asked. I excluded this question for constructing the knowledge groups. In 2007, the quiz was split into two parts. In addition to the normal quiz, a special quiz about the 50th anniversary of the European Parliament was developed, which dealt exclusively with statements about the EP. This additional quiz contained one question asked in previous studies and three further questions following the true-false-scheme; these questions were included to construct the groups. In addition, this quiz also contained two open questions and one question with two default possible answers, which were not true and false. These three questions were excluded from constructing the groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The European Union is made of 15 Member States.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The European Union has its own anthem.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The European Community was created after World War One, in the late 1910’s - early 20’s.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The European flag is blue and with yellow stars.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are 15 stars on the European flag.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The headquarters of the European Union are in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a President of the European Union directly elected by all the citizens.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are no borders between the countries of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>The European Union currently consists of twelve Member States.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The European Union has its own anthem.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The last European elections have taken place in June 2002.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The President of the European Commission is directly elected by the citizens of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each year, there is a Europe Day in all the countries of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>The European Union currently consists of fifteen Member States.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most of European budget is spent on administrative and personnel costs.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>The European Union currently consists of fifteen Member States.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The members of the European Parliament are directly elected by the citizens of the EU.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Every six month, a different Member State becomes the President of the Council of the European Union.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The euro area currently consists in twelve Member States.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The European Parliament was created 50 years ago.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any enlargement of the EU is subject to prior approval by the European Parliament.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The EU’s budget is determined jointly by the European Parliament and the Member States.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007).
With the help of the answers given to these questions, I divided the respondents of each data set into two groups. In the first step, I created a new variable for each statement. A correct answer is coded as ‘1’ and a wrong answer as ‘0’. ‘Don’t know’ answers are coded as ‘0’ as well, following Luskin and Bullock’s proposal to simply distinguish the respondents who know the answer from the respondents who are misinformed (incorrect answer) or uninformed (don’t know) (Luskin/Bullock 2004: 15). Then I created an additive index of political sophistication which includes all newly coded quiz questions. Depending on the data set, the index ranges vary from 0 to 3 in 2006 and 0 to 9 in 2003 (see Table 11). Zero means that the respondent could not answer any question correctly, while the highest score in each index means that the respondent answered all questions correctly.

Table 11: Distribution of the index of political sophistication for each point in time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of questions</th>
<th>Range of index (number of categories)</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>% correct answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0-9 (10)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0-6 (7)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0-3 (4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0-7 (8)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The number of questions in each data set is sufficient to generate an adequate index of political sophistication except for the 2006 data set. In this year, only three quiz questions are available, which is, in Zaller’s view (1992: 337, FN 4), an insufficient number of questions to adequately determine the level of political sophistication. However, I do not want to analyze the level of knowledge in detail as I am only interested in differences in the attitudes of different knowledge groups, so even this rather short quiz can be used to discriminate between the respondents according to their level of sophistication. However, one has to keep in mind that the index from 2006 ranges only from 0 to 3 which means that the knowledge groups can only be constructed very roughly because a precise gradation of political sophistication is impossible.

As the number, wording, and difficulty of the quiz questions vary considerably, I check to see if the quizzes are suitable to discriminate between the
knowledge groups. Even if I do not want to compare levels of knowledge from one data point to another, I want to show that the knowledge groups resulting from the quizzes are comparable between the data sets. To ensure this comparability, the average proportion of correct questions answered should be similar in all data sets because this indicates that the levels of difficulty of the quizzes are similar (Blais et al. 2009: 259-260). If the levels of difficulty are quite similar, the less sophisticated in one data set are comparable to the less sophisticated in another data set because it can be assumed that their level of knowledge is quite similar. Concurrently, the more sophisticated are comparable as well.

Table 11 lists the mean and standard deviation for the indices of political sophistication for all points in time. As the number of quiz questions varies, thus affecting the range of each index, I calculated the percentage of the averaged correct questions answered. This is a standardized measure suitable to check whether the levels of difficulty of the quizzes are comparable. The last column of Table 11 shows that the percentage of correct questions answered is almost identical except for the year 2006. Hence, the level of difficulty of three quizzes is similar. The quiz in 2006 seems to be more difficult than the others because the percentage of correct answers is lower. On the other hand, this result is perhaps a consequence of the low number of quiz questions in this survey, namely three, two of which requiring ‘false’ as the correct answer. Because respondents tend to agree with a given statement if they do not know the answer for sure, guessing in this case means that questions are more likely to be answered incorrectly than correctly. All in all, I am able to generate distinct knowledge groups from each data set which are generally comparable; however, the poor quality of the 2006 measure ought to be taken into account when it comes to interpreting the 2006 results in comparison with the other points in time.

To construct two knowledge groups with one group consisting of less sophisticated and the other of more sophisticated persons, I have to split the samples. I used the median to dichotomize the total sample to come up with equally large groups and to control for differences in the level of difficulty or in the ‘direction’ (true or false statements) of the questions. I include all persons surveyed in one

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90 Quizzes are intentionally designed to discriminate between citizens’ level of sophistication. Therefore, the questions vary over time to compensate for an increased knowledge on the aggregate level. For example, a question like “The EU consists of 12 member states” would be inappropriate to ask nowadays because most citizens might notice that the EU must have more members. In such a case, no variance regarding this question would occur, making such a question inappropriate for further analyses.

91 The median split is commonly proposed in the literature as an adequate method for dichotomizing a sample (Inglehart 1970: 54, Urban/Mayerl 2008: 300). Nevertheless, because the splitting method influences the size and distribution of the two knowledge groups, which in turn influences the results of the group comparisons, I also used another
of the categories, i.e. I do not restrict analyses to extreme groups consisting of only a small number of respondents. The category in which the median falls is a part of the less sophisticated group, which more clearly distinguishes the sophisticated persons from the low and average sophisticated persons. The sophisticated know more than half of the quiz questions in each survey. For example, in the data set from 2003, the respondents who knew none or up to five questions (as the median is five) become a part of the less sophisticated group; the respondents who correctly answered at least six questions are members of the more sophisticated group. This leads to the distribution of respondents into the knowledge groups as presented in Table 12. Except for 2006, more than 60 percent of the respondents are characterized as less sophisticated. In 2006, the two groups are of a similar size.

Table 12: Distribution of the population into knowledge groups (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less sophisticated</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High sophisticated</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These knowledge groups are used in the following empirical analyses, which will reveal how the level of EU support and the attitude structure underlying EU support are conditioned by the level of political sophistication of the citizens in CEE before the accession, shortly after the accession, and after years of EU membership.

splitting method to validate my results. I split the groups according to the number of correctly answered questions. In each data set, the respondents who could correctly answer half or more of the quiz questions became a part of the more sophisticated group; all others fell into the less sophisticated group. Using this method increases the number of individuals in the more sophisticated group for three out of four data sets. Fortunately, when descriptively analyzing the differences between knowledge groups regarding support for the EU or when explaining the attitude structure underlying EU support in a multiple group comparison in Amos, the main results are similar no matter which splitting method is used. The results are similar in a way that significant differences between the knowledge groups occur at all points in time; only the strength of single paths in the models differs marginally. Substantially, the same conclusions can be drawn from the median split and the proportion of correct answers-split. Because these tests support the results drawn from the groups coming from the median split, they indicate that the median split does not lead to arbitrary or insecure results.
4.7 Empirical analyses differentiated by the level of political sophistication

4.7.1 Level and development of support for the European Union

Figure 9 to Figure 12 show the level and development of generalized support for the EU in CEE conditioned by the level of sophistication. The aim of this chapter is to compare the level of support for the two knowledge groups. I have decided to present four distinct figures, with each figure displaying data of the two knowledge groups for a direct comparison. Because I have two indicators measuring EU support, it would be confusing and unclear if I put all values of each indicator in one figure. Therefore, Figure 9 contains the curves representing the percentages of citizens who did not answer the support-questions. Two curves show the percentage of ‘Don’t know’ answers of the less sophisticated group to either the membership- or the image-question. The other two curves show the same for the more sophisticated group. In an analogous manner, the three other figures represent the proportions of respondents who expressed neutral answers to the membership- and image-questions (Figure 10) or positive answers (Figure 11), or negative answers (Figure 12), respectively.

Theoretically, more sophisticated persons are expected to be in a better position to form and express an opinion on EU support. They possess both more specific and general information about the EU; therefore, they are better able to generate an overall evaluation of the EU from the considerations that spring to mind when asked to judge the remote and complex political system. Less sophisticated individuals have to admit more frequently that they have no opinion about the EU in general. This difference resulting from the level of sophistication should be reflected in different levels of ‘Don’t know’ answers to the support-questions. Indeed, less sophisticated persons answer support-questions less frequently than more sophisticated individuals. The proportion of ‘Don’t know’ answers is at least 2 percentage points higher among the less sophisticated (see Figure 9). This is the case during the whole period under investigation, thereby confirming hypothesis 12, which states that during the whole accession period, a higher share of people in the more sophisticated group is able to indicate whether or not they support the EU in general.92

92 A comparison of the number of ‘Don’t know’ answers to other questions concerning EU aspects reveals the same picture: Without exception, the proportion of ‘Don’t know’ answers is higher among the less sophisticated. To illustrate, in 2007, 24 percent of the less sophisticated did not answer the question on the satisfaction with EU democracy compared to only 10 percent among the more sophisticated. The proportion of ‘Don’t know’ answers for the questions on trust in EU institutions varies between 25 and 39 percent among the less sophisticated; in contrast, only between 9 and 20 percent of the more sophisticated gave no answer to one of these questions.
In addition, the comparison of ‘Don’t know’ answers shows that the differences between the knowledge groups slightly decrease over time. However, the differences do not entirely disappear as the proportion of ‘Don’t know’ answers in both groups is diminishing. This highlights another interesting detail: it seems that the increasing experience with the EU over time enables more and more citizens in the CEE population to form and express attitudes towards the EU in general no matter if they know much or little about the system.

Figure 9: Level and development of ‘Don’t know’ answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups

![Graph showing the level and development of 'Don’t know' answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups.](source)

The aforementioned hypothesis 12 is confirmed by another finding. Less sophisticated persons more frequently choose neutral categories when answering the support-questions (neither good nor bad as the answer to the membership-question, and neutral as the answer to the image-question) (see Figure 10). This pattern is visible during the whole period. In chapter 4.5.1, I have shown that there are high percentages of neutral answers to these two support-questions in the total population. I speculated that on the one hand, people may favor the middle category because they know too little to give a definite answer or, on the other hand, they may know a lot and come up with pros and cons of European in-
integration, which leads them to take a neutral position. As persons from both knowledge groups frequently chose the neutral position (between 25 and 36 percent of the more sophisticated, and between 34 and 42 percent of the less sophisticated), both explanations hold. However, as the less sophisticated more frequently opt for the neutral position (their proportion is at least 7 percentage points higher than the proportion of the sophisticated) they seem to be more indifferent. This is due to their limited knowledge of the EU which makes it harder to decide whether or not to support the rather unknown regime.

Figure 10: Level and development of neutral answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups

![Figure 10: Level and development of neutral answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups](https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845238043)

Figure 11 shows the proportion of CEE citizens expressing support for the EU by answering either that the EU is a good thing or that they have a very or fairly positive image of the EU. Support for the EU is astonishingly high among the more sophisticated. From 2003 until 2007, clearly more than half of this group supported the European system. In contrast, support among the less sophisticated is much lower during that same period. For the membership-question, the differences range from 16 percentage points in 2007 to 18 points in 2003. Comparing
the values of the image-question, the greatest difference occurs in 2003 (17 percentage points), and the lowest difference in 2004 (14 percentage points). On average, support for the EU is 17 (membership-question) and 16 percentage points (image-question) higher in the more sophisticated group compared to the less sophisticated group. It is striking that there is no approximation or convergence of the knowledge groups’ level of support over time. The four curves run almost parallel. This means that more experience in the EU does not reduce the difference in actively expressed support between the two knowledge groups.

Figure 11: Level and development of positive answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups

These findings are in accordance with hypothesis 13, which states that the level of generalized support for the EU is higher among the sophisticated. This is clearly shown for the whole period around the accession. Before and after the accession, the more sophisticated adopted the opinion of the leading political elites and the mass media because they are better equipped to do so; they have the opportunity, the ability, and the motivation to come into contact with leading opinions and to process new dominant information.
The hypothesis is also confirmed when interpreting the results regarding the rejection of support (see Figure 12). The less sophisticated group is more likely to deny support for the EU in the period around the accession. On average, 11 percent of the less sophisticated reject the EU as measured by the membership-question while only 7 percent of the more sophisticated do so. The image-question reveals the same result: on average, 15 percent of the less sophisticated say they have a very or fairly negative image of the EU; among the more sophisticated, only 10 percent have this view.

Figure 12: Level and development of negative answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups

![Graph showing the level and development of negative answers to support-questions differentiated by knowledge groups.](https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845238043)

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries.

This comparison of the development of the indicators for support over a period of time has shown considerable stability between 2003 and 2007 as has already been shown for the total population (see Figure 4). This stability is exaggerated if one concentrates on the four points in time analyzed here because they do not show the drawbacks in support between these points in time. Positive, neutral, or
negative attitudes towards the EU remain stable for each knowledge group measured at the four points in time. This means that the knowledge groups do not become equal in the course of time. Increasing experience with the EU does not change the differences between the knowledge groups. The gap remains which leads to the conclusion that a high level of political sophistication can be associated with support for the EU in different periods: before the accession, shortly after the accession, and during ‘normal’ times after years of EU membership. A relative majority of the more sophisticated citizens constantly supports the EU. Generally, this is the case for the less sophisticated as well, albeit on a lower level, but there are two exceptions regarding the less sophisticated group. In 2004 and 2006, a relative majority of the less sophisticated citizens expressed a neutral position on the image-question. Again, this finding emphasizes the rather insecure and undecided opinions among the less sophisticated.

In sum, the comparison of the percentages of citizens who support or oppose the EU conditioned by political sophistication reveals differences in the level of support between the two knowledge groups. But these ‘visible’ differences do not tell anything about the significance of these differences. Therefore, I test whether the differences in the level of generalized EU support between the two knowledge groups are statistically significant by using a mean comparison. Because a Kolmogorov-Smirnov-Test has shown that the values for both support-questions do not come from a normal distribution, the U-Test by Mann and Whitney is the appropriate test (Bühl 2008: 318-322). The Mann-Whitney-U-Test tests the equality of measures of location for two independent samples if no normal distribution exists. Table 13 gives an overview of the means of the membership- and the image-question for four points in time separated by two knowledge groups. For both questions and for all years, the means of the more sophisticated are higher than the means for the less sophisticated, indicating that the more sophisticated are more supportive of the EU. This mirrors the results already drawn from the figures above. The Mann-Whitney-U-Test confirms for all mean comparisons between the knowledge groups that the means differ in a statistically significant way. The confirmation that the level of support for the EU is conditioned by the level of political sophistication is an important empirical finding that endorses the heterogeneity assumption with regard to attitudes towards the EU.

These significant differences regarding support for the EU lead to the question of whether the level of political sophistication conditions the attitude structure underlying EU support. There are very good theoretical reasons to conclude that

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93 Two exceptions are the negative views measured by the image-question. Within both knowledge groups, the proportion of negative answers decreases considerably, especially between 2003 and 2004 (cf. Figure 12).
the heterogeneity of persons does not only affect the level of support but the opinion formation process underlying support as well because it is argued that the level of political sophistication changes the relevance of single factors explaining support. This will be assumed in particular if heuristics play a role in the opinion formation because the use of these judgmental shortcuts is often conditioned by the level of political sophistication. To examine and to compare the attitude structure underlying EU support between less and more sophisticated citizens, the model of generalized EU support is estimated with the help of the multiple group comparison in Amos.

Table 13: Means differentiated by knowledge groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries.

Before estimating and interpreting the multivariate models, I will shortly summarize the descriptive findings on the level of EU support for the year 2007 because it is the most recent year in the study and the following multiple group comparison is calculated for this year.

2007 can be seen as an ordinary year without any anomalies. The level of EU support is slightly higher in 2007 than in the preceding years. This is due to the fact that the positive answers increased while the negative ones did not change. Instead, the neutral and ‘Don’t know’ answers decreased compared to previous years. This is true for both knowledge groups. The mean comparison reveals that for the more sophisticated EU support is 0.2 points higher on the 3-points-scale of the membership-question and 0.25 points higher on the 5-points-scale of the image-question. Higher support among the more sophisticated appears because of a higher percentage of positive answers and a lower percentage of negative answers to both questions. Among the more sophisticated, 64 percent (membership) and 60 percent (image) supported the EU; among the less sophisticated, 47 and 44 percent, respectively (see Figure 11). The other way around, among the more sophisticated, only 7 and 8 percent rejected the EU while 12 percent per question of the less sophisticated expressed this attitude (see Figure 12). Net support (support minus rejection of the EU) listed in Table 14 shows the situa-
tion more clearly: the difference between the more and the less sophisticated adds up to 21 (membership) and 20 (image) percentage points.

Table 14: Net support differentiated by knowledge groups, 2007 (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Membership-question</th>
<th>Image-question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less sophisticated</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More sophisticated</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference (percentage points)</td>
<td>- 20.8</td>
<td>- 20.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated).

Here is a final remark on the undecided answers. Like in previous years, in 2007, the less sophisticated were more likely to express a neutral answer or indicate that they did not know an answer. Compared with the more sophisticated, the difference in the proportion of neutral answers is 8 (membership) and 10 (image) percentage points. There are almost no sophisticated persons who were not able to answer the support-questions (less than 1 percent per question). Although the proportion among the less sophisticated is very low as well, especially when compared to previous years, the difference between the knowledge groups is still visible: 4 (membership) and 2 (image) percent of the less sophisticated could not or did not want to answer the questions.

With these differences in mind, the next chapter explains whether political sophistication influences the attitude structure underlying support and whether political sophistication accounts for differences in the use of cognitive heuristics.

4.7.2 The attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

The research question guiding this analysis asks whether the influence of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics on support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe varies depending on the citizens’ level of political sophistication. Theoretical considerations on the moderating effect of political sophistication, the opinion formation process, and the attitude structure underlying EU support found very good reasons for why the level of sophistication should condition the effects of heuristics on specific EU attitudes and EU support.

Testing the conditional influence of political sophistication is done by a simultaneous comparison of two structural equation models – one for the less sophisticated, one for the more sophisticated – in a multiple group comparison. The general procedure is described in detail in chapter 4.5.3 and the comparison of knowledge groups follows these general remarks.
Before starting a multiple group comparison, some preliminary analyses are useful to gain more knowledge of the data used and to ensure that the data is appropriate for a multiple group comparison. Therefore, I repeated the EFA and CFA using the settings described in chapter 4.5.2.1 separately for each knowledge group. These analyses help to clarify whether the congeneric model fits both groups at all points in time. In sum, the results for both knowledge groups substantially resemble the results for the total population meaning that both groups can differentiate between the latent constructs and that each construct is adequately measured by its items at all points in time (see Appendix: Table C.7 to Table C.14).

In the next step, I specify a baseline model for each knowledge group. There are no theoretical reasons for why the baseline models should differ between the groups or why they should differ from the model used for the total population. Therefore, the model widely used in this study, which I presented in chapter 4.5.2.2 in Figure 7 is used as the starting point for this multiple group analysis as well.94 In addition, I ensure the fitting of the identical model for both groups empirically. A separate estimation of two distinct models reveals that all factor loadings and path coefficients are significant (p<0.001), and the overall fit for each model is good. The model fits the more sophisticated group slightly better; for the less sophisticated, the fit measure RMSEA only just meets the cut-off criterion between a good and an acceptable fit. However, GFI and AGFI indicate a close fit, and it is possible to use this baseline model for both groups (see Table 15). For reasons of parsimony and consistency, I do not introduce additional structural paths or covariances.

Table 15: Model fit from a separate test for each knowledge group, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>P-close</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less sophisticated</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More sophisticated</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.959</td>
<td>0.966</td>
<td>0.957</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated). All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

With regard to the research question, I am interested in describing and comparing the attitude structure underlying EU support. Therefore, I restrict the analysis to an interpretation of the path coefficients in the less and more sophisticated

94 Indeed, separate calculations of the initially assumed theoretical model with a direct path between national identity and EU support for each knowledge group reveal that the respective path is substantially meaningless and insignificant (p>0.05 for the less and the more sophisticated) in both models in 2007. Hence, the relation does not exist in the attitude structure of less and more sophisticated citizens.
model. Following the theory about support for the EU and the usage of heuristics, I assume that all specified paths are relevant in the attitude structure of both groups, but their impact, i.e. their strength, differs by the level of political sophistication because this variable works as a moderator variable.

The first step to test whether a moderator effect exists is to compare the various models with different constraining assumptions which Amos calculates in a multiple group comparison. This comparison reveals that the measurement weights model fits the data best. This model assumes that the factor loadings, i.e. the paths from the latent constructs to ‘their’ manifest indicators, are similar in both knowledge groups; this is a precondition for a reasonable moderator test. However, because this model fits only slightly better than the structural weights model, which assumes similar path coefficients ($\chi^2/df$ of the measurement weights model = 10.6; $\chi^2/df$ of the structural weights model = 10.8; $\chi^2/df$ of the unconstrained model = 11.1), it can be assumed that there is only a weak general moderator effect. This means that either the differences between the path coefficients are rather small or the moderator only affects some but not all paths in the model. Nevertheless, political sophistication works as a moderator to a certain extent and, in the following paragraphs, I will compare the significance and strength of the path coefficients to clarify the situation. First of all, the overall model fit of the simultaneous multiple group comparison is good, indicating that the model fits the data for the less and the more sophisticated (see Table 16). Hence, the model is suitable for a comparison of the significances and strengths of the relevant parameters across knowledge groups.

Table 16: Model fit of the multiple group comparison of two knowledge groups, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>P-close</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated). All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Figure 13 and Figure 14 show the unstandardized path coefficients for the less sophisticated and the more sophisticated. The results can be interpreted by comparing the paths between the same constructs with each other across the two models. All paths in both models are statistically significant (p<0.001), indicating that all relations are relevant in describing the attitude structure of both knowledge groups. The relations show the theoretically assumed direction. The positive relationships between specific EU attitudes and EU support are supported by Fuchs’ original model of support for a political regime. These relations emphasize that all citizens generalize attitudes towards EU performances and
Figure 13: Structural equation model representing the attitude structure underlying support for the EU of the less sophisticated group, 2007

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274. Unstandardized path coefficients from the measurement weights model. Level of significance of all path coefficients: p<0.001. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Figure 14: Structural equation model representing the attitude structure underlying support for the EU of the more sophisticated group, 2007

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=2999. Unstandardized path coefficients from the measurement weights model. Level of significance of all path coefficients: p<0.001. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
European identity to evaluate the EU in general, independent of their level of knowledge. These positive relations between specific EU attitudes and EU support are one prerequisite that allow national attitudes to carry out their influence on EU support, and this prerequisite is met for both groups.

The positive relations between national attitudes serving as heuristics and specific EU attitudes are theoretically well-grounded by cognitive psychological findings on the use of heuristics. Significant positive relations reveal that all citizens are able to use the proposed simple and less demanding shortcuts to evaluate the EU. This is the first sign that this kind of shortcut is accessible to less sophisticated individuals. Furthermore, the more sophisticated seem to use these shortcuts too, indicating that the EU is a remote and complex system for them as well. Both groups rely on easily accessible national attitudes to make judgements on the EU, and neither group strictly separates the two political systems. Indeed, less and more sophisticated Central and Eastern Europeans simultaneously evaluate the two political systems either positively or negatively. These findings are totally in accordance with the assumption that both knowledge groups need heuristics because the European system would be difficult to evaluate even for more sophisticated persons after only three years of EU membership.

In the following paragraph, I analyze which group relies more heavily on heuristics when evaluating the EU. The model of EU support supposes a fully mediated effect of national attitudes on EU support through specific EU attitudes. Therefore, I start with the differences in the relations between specific EU attitudes and EU support before I deal with the differences in the influence of national attitudes on either specific EU attitudes or EU support.

I expect that the influence of specific EU attitudes does not vary systematically as a function of the level of political sophistication. However, comparing the path coefficients reveals that two relations differ substantially, namely the effects of EU generalized and EU systemic performance on support. The other two relations – the influence of EU democratic performance and European identity on support – are equally strong. EU systemic performance has a stronger influence on EU support among the less knowledgeable group. For this group the most obvious dimension of European integration is more dominant in opinion formation on EU support. European economic policy, which is a part of the systemic performance dimension, is the policy most discussed in the media and by political elites; this makes it possible even for the less informed or the less interested to get an idea of the existence of this dimension. Among the more sophisticated, the role of European institutions more strongly affects EU support. This rather demanding EU attitude, which requires some knowledge of the role of EU institutions in the European system, can be more easily used by the more sophisticated because they are better equipped to connect the working of European institutions to EU support.
The similar influence of EU democratic performance and European identity on support is statistically corroborated. Amos provides critical ratios (estimates divided by their standard errors) to test whether or not the coefficients in a multiple group comparison are statistically different. These critical ratios follow a z-distribution. If a critical ratio is larger than |1.96|, one would reject the null hypothesis (at the 0.05 level) that the two coefficients compared between two groups are equal. This means that the coefficients describing the same path in two compared models differ from each other statistically (Arbuckle 2008a: 30). The critical ratios for my knowledge groups’ comparison reveal that the path coefficients from EU democratic performance and European identity on support are not significantly different between the less and the more sophisticated since the value of each critical ratio is less than |1.96|. This finding is in accordance with the remarks made above: political sophistication is moderating the attitude structure underlying EU support but some relations in the model reflecting this attitude structure are not affected.

One prerequisite for the indirect influence of national attitudes on EU support is fulfilled: both models show significant, positive relations between specific EU attitudes and EU support. However, with regard to two specific EU attitudes, differences between the groups are found concerning the strength of the relationship. This finding is important because these relations affect the indirect influence of national attitudes serving as shortcuts on support. Before analyzing the indirect effect of these national attitudes, I concentrate on their direct influence on their equivalent specific EU attitudes. These relations are at the core of the usage of shortcuts because they show if and how strongly the less and the more sophisticated rely on shortcuts when evaluating EU aspects. A first look at the path coefficients between the latent constructs describing national and European performances already confirms that perceptions of national performances have a stronger influence on their equivalent specific EU attitudes among the less sophisticated (hypotheses 14a). All three coefficients are considerably higher for the less sophisticated. This finding reveals the greater importance of shortcuts in the attitude structure of this group. The less sophisticated rely more heavily on these shortcuts when evaluating specific EU aspects than the more sophisticated. This is in accordance with the heterogeneity assumption, which states that there are differences in opinion formation process between less and more knowledgeable persons. The less sophisticated do not possess enough information to form EU attitudes independent of national attitudes. Hence, they use easily available and accessible national attitudes to form opinions about the European system about which they know only a little. More concretely, while retrieving considerations about European aspects, they use stored considerations about the nation-state, which are linked to those EU aspects that they are asked to express an opinion about. Long-term memory seems to consist of a schema which includes
information about the national and the European system. One can imagine that if a person is asked something about the EU, considerations about the equivalent national aspect are activated almost automatically, so they can influence the opinion formation about the EU aspect. The weaker relationships of national and European attitudes among the more sophisticated persons lead to the assumption that they rely less often on national attitudes as heuristics. They also use them because the EU is a remote and complex object for them as well, but they possess some information about that remote and complex system to express more independent opinions about it. Their long-term memory may consist of two separate schemata – one contains information about the nation-state, the other information about the EU – and these schemata are linked to each other. When asked something about the EU, the national system-schema is activated if suitable EU considerations are neither available nor accessible.

In summary, less sophisticated persons possess a small, low-ranging, and simply organized belief system, so they are generally not able to form independent attitudes towards specific EU aspects, like EU performances. This is why they urgently require judgmental shortcuts to form such attitudes. The more sophisticated have a larger, wide-ranging, and better organized belief system. On the one hand, this belief system allows them to form independent attitudes towards EU aspects in some occasions; on the other hand, even this group uses heuristics from the national context when they cannot come up with useful EU considerations.

The analyses presented thus far reveal that five out of six paths connected to performance constructs significantly differ between the knowledge groups. This has consequences for the indirect effects of national attitudes serving as heuristics on EU support. Again, the indirect effects from national attitudes on EU support are substantially low (see Table 17). However, the calculation of significances with the bootstrapping method shows that the coefficients are statistically significant. In addition, the 95% confidence intervals indicate that even the lower bounds of these intervals for all indirect coefficients are larger than zero which means that the coefficients can be assumed to differ from zero.

The effect of national generalized performance on EU support is slightly higher among the less sophisticated group. This rather small difference between the two groups occurs because the two paths involved in this indirect effect behave differently for the two groups. The effect of national generalized performance on its EU equivalent is higher for the less sophisticated but the effect from EU generalized performance on EU support is higher among the more sophisticated; therefore, the group differences almost cancel each other out when considering the total or indirect effect. In contrast, the two effects involved in the indirect effect of national economic performance on EU support reinforce each
Table 17: Indirect effects of national attitudes on support for the EU differentiated by knowledge groups, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Attitudes</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indirect effects</td>
<td>Bootstrap S.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated). Unstandardized path coefficients. 95% confidence intervals. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
other. Both paths show stronger effects for the less knowledgeable which results in a stronger indirect effect. Regarding the influence of national democratic performance on support, no difference between the knowledge groups is observed. The difference that is detected for the influence of national democratic performance on its EU equivalent is not strong enough to be visible in the indirect effect. In sum, two out of three indirect effects confirm hypothesis 14b, which states that performances of the nation-state have a stronger indirect influence on generalized support for the EU among the less sophisticated because they have a greater need for shortcuts to form opinions about very general EU questions.

While the differences between the knowledge groups are evident in the use of heuristics, there are no differences in the role of national identity. The coefficients from national identity on European identity are equally strong for both groups; likewise, the critical ratios show that the paths are statistically invariant between the groups. The level of sophistication does not condition this relation, just like it does not condition the influence of European identity on support, as mentioned above. This confirms hypothesis 15, which states that there are no differences between the knowledge groups concerning the influence of national identity on European identity and on generalized support for the EU. No differences are assumed because it is rather unlikely that the amount of information and structure of the belief system affect feelings towards the European community and one’s membership in such a community, provided that the existence of this community is known. Rather, national identity and European identity are evaluated on the basis of emotions or gut feelings, which in turn are not guided by political sophistication.

The findings on the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes can be confirmed by comparing the variances of each latent construct reflecting EU attitudes. Table 18 compares the explained variances and reveals that national latent constructs better explain their European counterparts in case of the less sophisticated group. As the variances depend on the strength of the path coefficients pointing to each endogenous latent construct, the explained variances follow the same patterns as the path coefficients between national and European attitudes. All explained variances are higher for the less sophisticated but the differences between the given constructs vary enormously. In effect, variances differ greatly for EU systemic performance, while smaller differences occur for the other performances, and no difference is observed in the case of EU identity.

Besides differences in the variance of specific EU attitudes, the explanatory power of the whole model of generalized support for the EU differs between the two knowledge groups. The explained variance of support for the EU in the model for the less sophisticated group is 45 percent, which drops to 31 percent when the more sophisticated group is considered. The higher explained variance of the dependent variable for the less sophisticated group can be explained by the
limited ability of these citizens to separate EU support from the other concepts in the model. Their belief system is not well structured and political attitudes are enmeshed in one schema. Citizens’ ability to differentiate between various constructs, whether between the national and the European level or between different concepts on the EU level, increases with more information about politics in general and European aspects in particular. Hence, more sophisticated persons possess a better organized and more complex attitude structure. My model is better able to depict the simple attitude structure of the less sophisticated than the more complex structure of the more sophisticated.

Table 18: Explained variance of endogenous latent constructs in the model of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2007 (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific EU attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU identity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variable</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated). Explained variances from the measurement weights model of the multiple group comparison. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Knowing that the less sophisticated rely more on heuristics raises the question of which national attitudes this group uses most. Do they need and use shortcuts for the evaluation of all specific EU attitudes or is one shortcut more important than another? And even if the more sophisticated do not use heuristics as frequently, an analysis of the standardized effects can tell us for which EU aspect this group needs shortcuts most urgently.

Table 19 provides the standardized path coefficients. These coefficients result from independent analyses for each knowledge group; thus, they are only comparable within each group so the table must be interpreted column by column. Comparing the direct influence of national attitudes on their EU equivalents for the less sophisticated reveals that national democratic and national economic performances have a similar and the strongest influence as shortcuts. This result has been found for the population as a whole. The effect of national generalized performance is much smaller. This means that the less sophisticated need useful considerations about the national system to evaluate the functioning of the European democracy and the political outputs of the EU in various policy areas. Among the more sophisticated, national democratic performance clearly
has the strongest influence on its EU counterpart, followed by a slightly weaker effect of national economic performance, and the influence of national generalized performance is very small. When evaluating the functioning of the European democracy even the more sophisticated have to rely heavily on attitudes towards the functioning of the national system which reveals that this judgment is too demanding to be formed independently.

Table 19: Relative strength of the effects in the model of support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe for each knowledge group, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU generalized performance</th>
<th>EU support</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European identity</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National generalized performance</th>
<th>EU generalized performance</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
<td>EU democratic performance</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td>European identity</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National generalized performance</th>
<th>EU support</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity</td>
<td>EU support</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated), N=8273 (total). Standardized path coefficients from separate models for each knowledge group and for the total population. For each knowledge group and for the total population all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

The indirect influence of single national attitudes on EU support shows that national economic performance has the strongest influence among the less sophisticated. Its contribution to explaining EU support is substantially small, but nota-
ble compared to the other national attitudes. Because the effect of EU systemic performance on support is the strongest among the specific EU attitudes, the causal chain describing the influence of national economic and EU systemic performance on EU support is the most important one in explaining EU support among the less sophisticated. This is in line with the theoretical consideration that less knowledgeable persons use the most obvious European aspect, namely its economic dimension, and its suitable shortcut, namely the national economy, to come to a general EU evaluation. Among the more sophisticated, all indirect effects from national attitudes to EU support are similarly small, indicating that no single causal chain dominates their attitude structure.

To summarize the main concern of this chapter, I assumed differences between the less and the more sophisticated regarding their use of heuristics based on theoretical argumentations about the heterogeneity assumption and the moderating effect of political sophistication on the attitude structure underlying EU support. This assumption has been summarized in an overall hypothesis which is supported by the empirical findings. National attitudes play a more important role among the less sophisticated citizens, i.e. citizens knowing little about the EU use cognitive heuristics – namely the attitudes towards the nation-state – to evaluate the EU to a higher extent than more sophisticated citizens.

4.7.3 Development of the attitude structure underlying support for the European Union

The last chapter described the differences in the use of heuristics between the less and the more sophisticated in the year 2007, three years after the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the European Union. These differences were visible at a time when the EU had become a part of the citizens’ day-to-day lives and experience with the EU had grown steadily. This chapter compares the attitude structure of the two knowledge groups at a time when EU experience was more limited, assessing whether the differences existed before the accession and shortly afterwards, i.e. at a time when the EU still was an even more remote system.

To compare the differences between less and more sophisticated persons at four points in time, I estimate a multiple group comparison with two knowledge groups for each point in time separately. This method does not allow for estimating statistically significant changes within one group in the course of time. Such a descriptive comparison over time is still useful, however, seeing that the aim of this chapter is to compare significant differences between knowledge groups at various points in time. The analyses are based on an identical baseline model for all knowledge groups at all points in time – the same model used elsewhere in
this study (see Figure 7). As this model fits all data sets (see Table 20), it is used without any modifications. In the following comparison, the unstandardized path coefficients from the measurements weights models are analyzed and interpreted because this model holds and fits best in all multiple group comparisons for the remaining three points in time. Therefore, the method resembles the method used in previous chapters where it is explained in more detail (see Chapter 4.5.3).

Table 20: Model fit of the multiple group comparisons of two knowledge groups, 2003-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>P-close</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.972</td>
<td>0.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.974</td>
<td>0.968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.970</td>
<td>0.963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. For each year all estimations are based on five separate imputations.

Table 21 contains the information necessary to answer the question about differences concerning the relevance of national attitudes serving as shortcuts shortly before the accession to the EU, right after the accession, and after years of EU membership depending on the citizens’ level of knowledge.

Before highlighting the differences between the groups, I briefly describe the development of the attitude structure over time for each knowledge group separately. As mentioned above, I estimated separate models for each point in time; thus, it is not tested if the changes over time within each knowledge group are statistically significant. The results will only be described without making any

I also tested how the initially assumed direct path from national identity to EU support behaves over time in models calculated for the knowledge groups separately. Again, this path never reaches high statistical significance (p>0.001), and the substantial effect is never as large as 0.1. Hence, I have decided to use the model depicted in Figure 7 for the empirical test of the temporal development of the attitude structure of the less and the more sophisticated citizens.

Again, the differences between the unconstrained, the measurement weights, and the structural weights models are very small, indicating that the moderator effect is influential but only affects some rather than all paths in the model at all points in time (2003: $\chi^2$/df of the measurement weights model = 9.4; $\chi^2$/df of the unconstrained model = 9.7; $\chi^2$/df of the structural weights model = 9.5; 2004: $\chi^2$/df = 9.2; 9.5; 9.4; 2006: $\chi^2$/df = 10.2; 10.4; 10.4).
assumptions about their statistical significance. Table 21 shows the temporal development of various paths in the model for each knowledge group. The analysis is done by a line-by-line assessment whereby every other column is compared in order to make statements about one knowledge group because the results for each knowledge group for a particular year are presented side by side.

Firstly, the use of national attitudes as shortcuts is depicted in the strength of the influence of national performances on their EU equivalents. The comparison of these three paths for the less sophisticated reveals that the use of shortcuts tends to decrease between 2003 and 2007; however, we do not observe a gradual decline. The highest influence of the national performances is found in 2004 (for national generalized performance, in 2006). The comparatively low influence in 2003 can, again, be explained by the rather high awareness of the EU in the year of the referendums on EU membership as explained in more detail in the interpretation of the temporal development of the attitude structure of the total population (see Chapter 4.5.3). The same pattern is found for the path coefficients for the more sophisticated even though the substantial strength of the corresponding paths concerning the performances differs between the knowledge groups.

Secondly, the use of national attitudes as shortcuts is reflected in their indirect influence on EU support. The development of the effects of specific EU attitudes on support must be described before interpreting the indirect effects of the shortcuts. For both knowledge groups, the influence of EU performances tends to decrease over time if one only compares the results from 2003 with 2007. However, over the whole period, no clear pattern can be identified given that the development is characterized by ups and downs.

With this background in mind, the indirect effects of the shortcuts on EU support can be described. Similar to the influence of national performances on their EU equivalents, the indirect effects on EU support tend to decrease between 2003 and 2007 in both knowledge groups. Changes are substantially low, however, as the indirect effects are very low. When comparing the development of these paths for the less sophisticated, no uniform development is recognizable because every indirect effect follows its own pattern over time. In contrast, for the more sophisticated, two national performances, generalized and democratic performance, show a steady decrease over time.

Overall, the patterns described here more or less resemble the patterns described for the total population. They clearly reveal that the influence of shortcuts tends to decrease between 2003 and 2007 which means that shortcuts are used less by the less and the more sophisticated persons alike as their experience and familiarity with the EU increases. As all citizens gain experience with the remote and complex new system, a parallel decrease of the influence of national performances occurs in both knowledge groups. This confirms hypothesis
Table 21: Changes in the attitude structure underlying EU support in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2003-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU generalized performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU democratic performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European identity → EU support</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance → EU generalized performance</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance → EU systemic performance</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance → EU democratic performance</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.62**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity → European identity</td>
<td>0.63**</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National generalized performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National democratic performance → EU support</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
<td>0.05*</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National identity → EU support</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
<td>0.05**</td>
<td>0.03*</td>
<td>0.03*</td>
<td>0.04**</td>
<td>0.03**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003), Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004), 65.2 (Spring 2006), 68.1 (Fall 2007). For each year: pooled data, eight countries, 2003: N=8125; 2004: N=8344; 2006: N=8238; 2007: N=8273. Unstandardized path coefficients from the measurement weights models of the multiple group comparisons for four points in time. Level of significance: * p<0.01, ** p<0.001, bootstrapped significances for indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support. For each year, all estimations are based on five separate imputations.
which states that the influence of performances of the nation-state on specific EU attitudes and on generalized support for the EU decreases in both knowledge groups over time.

This description of the temporal development of the use of heuristics when evaluating the EU separately for both knowledge groups is followed by a direct comparison of the use of heuristics among the less and the more sophisticated over time. The knowledge groups’ comparison for 2007 showed differences in the use of heuristics. Three years after the accession, national attitudes played a more important role among the less sophisticated citizens. The description of the temporal development revealed that the use of heuristics was higher for both knowledge groups at the beginning of the period analyzed. Combining these findings leads to the conclusion that the differences between the knowledge groups are likely to have existed in previous years as well because a parallel development of the knowledge groups is assumed. All citizens start in a low information environment before EU accession; in the course of time, experience with the EU increases but, as the more sophisticated are better equipped to process new information, the differences between the groups remain. To check this conclusion, for each point in time, similarities and differences between the two knowledge groups are analyzed. The path coefficients, listed in Table 21, can be compared for each year across the knowledge groups because the multiple group approach allows for estimating statistically significant differences. In the following paragraph, the two columns listed under each year are compared line-by-line.

An initial inspection of the path coefficients depicting the relations between national attitudes and their EU equivalents or between national attitudes and EU support shows that all coefficients for political performance measures are higher for the less sophisticated group at all points in time. Substantially, the groups’ differences are larger regarding the influence of national performances on their EU equivalents. In contrast, the differences between the indirect effects of national attitudes on EU support are very low but significant. However, they complement the overall picture. Thus, these cross-temporal findings on knowledge group differences mirror the results of 2007, described in detail in the previous chapter.

The results from 2003 indicate that before the accession less sophisticated Central and Eastern Europeans relied more heavily on national attitudes as shortcuts for the evaluation of EU aspects. The differences in the attitude structure between less and more sophisticated individuals existed from the beginning of CEE’s interaction with the EU. Lacking experience with the EU, the less sophisticated used shortcuts intensively to make judgments on the EU. In this situation, the more sophisticated needed shortcuts as well, to a higher extent than in later years, but to a lower extent than the less sophisticated.
The analysis of the temporal development of the usage of heuristics in the total population reveals that heuristics were most important in 2004 when awareness of the EU decreased in the wake of the 2003 referendums on EU membership and the related campaigns. The comparison of the knowledge groups shows that both groups generally needed shortcuts most during that time. At a time when experience with the EU was limited and awareness of and interest in the EU was low, differences between the knowledge groups were obvious as well.

Lastly, the results for 2006 support the findings from all other points in time. Again, the influence of attitudes towards national performances on their EU equivalents and EU support was higher among the less sophisticated.

In accordance with my theoretical assumptions, there is no moderator effect concerning the effects of national identity on European identity or EU support. A short look at the coefficients confirms this assumption for the relation between national identity and European identity. Over time, the influence of national identity on European identity decreases gradually in both groups, as seen in the whole population as well.

In contrast, the development of the effects of European identity on EU support differs slightly between the groups. Among the less knowledgeable, this relationship steadily increased during the whole period analyzed. For the more sophisticated, this relation was insignificant in 2003 on all common levels of significance; this is one out of two insignificant relations in all the models that I presented in this study. This indicates that the affective-evaluative attitude did not play a role on the overall evaluation of the EU before the accession among the more sophisticated if cognitive-evaluative attitudes like EU performances were controlled for. Instead, this group used knowledge-based considerations about specific EU aspects to decide whether or not to support the EU. In 2004, the influence of European identity increased to a significant level and remained stable during the whole period analyzed.

This all leads to the following consequence: for both the less and more sophisticated citizens, the indirect influence of national identity on EU support remained pretty stable on a very low level in the period analyzed, whereby this effect for the more sophisticated was insignificant in 2003.

The comparison of the two knowledge groups for each year reveals that knowledge usually does not moderate effects concerning the identities. As has been stated above, the only difference is that in 2003 the effects of national identity and European identity on EU support were insignificant for the more sophisticated, while these effects were significant for the less sophisticated. However, this difference does not remain over time. Generally, the related coefficients for both knowledge groups differ neither in their significance nor in their substantial meaning. Thus, it can be concluded that the affective-driven parts in the attitude
structure underlying EU support are not moderated by knowledge in the Central and Eastern European context.

Overall, in the Central and Eastern European context, the level of political sophistication moderates the effects of the three cognitive-evaluative national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and EU support before the accession, shortly after the accession, and after years of EU membership. The temporal development reveals no differences between the years, which means that the level of sophistication, i.e. the size, range, and structure of a person’s belief system, conditions the use of heuristics independently of the specific phase of the integration process. Even if experience within the EU increases and it is possible to receive more information about the EU, e.g. through the mass media or personal experiences, the level of sophistication still leads to differences in the attitude structure underlying EU support. Opinion formation is always guided by stored considerations and their organization in long-term memory. The cognitive prerequisites enable more sophisticated persons to retrieve more independent EU considerations when asked to evaluate this remote and complex system. However, they need shortcuts as well because even they do not possess enough information to form completely independent EU attitudes. This need decreases over time as experience with the EU increases. The last point is true for the less sophisticated as well. Indeed, less sophisticated citizens’ use of heuristics decreases over time, too, but starting from a considerably higher level. The gap between the two knowledge groups in their use of heuristics thus remains, even years after the accession.

In summary, with reference to hypotheses 17a and 17b, during the whole period around the accession, performances of the nation-state have a stronger influence on their equivalent specific EU attitudes and on generalized EU support among the less sophisticated. Generally, the relations between national and European attitudes among Central and Eastern Europeans are conditioned by the level of political sophistication before the accession, shortly after the accession, and after years of EU membership.
This study aimed to provide an analysis of the formation of support for the European Union in Central and Eastern Europe in the period around the CEE countries’ accession to the EU. In doing so, the study put a special emphasis on the role of cognitive heuristics in the opinion formation process. Three research questions guided this analysis. The first question asked about the attitudes that could explain EU support in CEE. In particular, the question tackled the role of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in explaining EU support, as well as their position in the opinion formation process regarding EU support. To put it in another way, the analysis aimed to explain the attitude structure underlying EU support. The second question was directly associated with the first as it asked for the changes over time in the proposed attitude structure. This question sought to show whether the relevance of single determinants of EU support, and the relevance of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics in particular, changed in the period from shortly before the accession until after several years of EU membership.

Both questions are clearly empirical questions, although the first one focuses on explaining support while the second has a merely descriptive focus. Hence, this work clarified the empirical relevance of cognitive heuristics in the European context over time. However, preliminary theoretical considerations were necessary because no convincing model representing the attitude structure underlying EU support in the post-communist region had been available.

To close this gap in research, I developed a theoretical model. The model specification was guided by existing research on EU attitudes and by findings from cognitive psychology. EU research, and especially the model of EU support by Fuchs (2003), which is embedded into political culture research and established approaches from regime support research, was used to identify important attitudes determining EU support. These attitudes were generalized attitudes towards the European political authorities and the outputs they produce from a utilitarian and value-based perspective (systemic and democratic performance), as well as the identification with the European community. In addition, Fuchs modeled national attitudes as shortcuts to account for the distinctiveness of the European system compared with national systems. This was completely in accordance with other researchers (e.g. Anderson 1998, Kritzinger 2003, Hooghe/Marks 2005), who had claimed that EU support could not be explained by attitudes directly related to the EU alone because this attitudinal object was a remote and complex object. Citizens had to rely on simpler considerations when evaluating...
specific EU aspects or EU support in general. Such considerations might be related to the nation-state because it is the political system with which citizens are familiar and it is related to the EU in a multi-level regime. Even if Fuchs’ model basically includes the relevant determinants of EU support, the specific type of the national attitudes and the arrangement of all determinants in a causal model had to be specified in light of psychological approaches.

Cognitive psychological research on the role of heuristics indicated that citizens use easily accessible heuristics to compensate for a lack of knowledge and to form an opinion about a remote object related to the heuristic applied. This led to the conclusion that specific shortcuts from the nation-state influence equivalent attitudes towards the EU. That means specific EU attitudes – EU performances – are affected by national performances. Their influence on EU support is indirect only. The influence of shortcuts on EU support is mediated through specific EU attitudes.

Social psychology research helped clarify the role of political identities in the opinion formation process. It became known that national identity and European identity can both influence EU support; in addition, both identities can coexist as multiple identities and national identity – the primary political identity – influences the formation of the more remote European identity. Hence, it was theoretically assumed that national identity affects EU support directly and indirectly, i.e. mediated through European identity.

Apart from these model specifications deduced from research on attitudes towards remote political objects in general, one modification was introduced to account for a particularity of the post-communist context. A discussion of the political and economic background of the CEE region showed that it was meaningful to specify a further dimension of political performance which captures the interaction of national and European political actors during the transformation process. After communism, the national elites in the CEE countries and the EU worked together in establishing democracies and market economies in this region in order to guarantee stability and peace on the European continent. Therefore, the political actors working on one of the two political levels were evaluated together as they struggled for similar aims. Hence, the model was amended by another kind of performance, a performance that captures a direct and generalized evaluation of political actors. This generalized performance took the same position in the model as the other performances. The generalized performance of the nation-state influences the generalized performance of the EU, which in turn influences EU support.

In sum, my model describes the assumed attitude structure underlying EU support. It was guided by the assumption that easily accessible national attitudes help to form attitudes towards remote and complex European objects. These specific EU attitudes in turn culminate into an overall evaluation of the EU.
To structure the empirical analyses following the theoretical considerations, several hypotheses concerning the influence of single determinants in the model of EU support were formulated. Hypotheses dealing with the model in general centered on the main assumption that national attitudes serve as shortcuts when evaluating European aspects. Hypotheses concerning the temporal development of the attitude structure followed the assumption that increasing experience with the EU leads to a decrease in the influence of national attitudes as the need for cognitive heuristics diminished.

The model was tested empirically using pooled Eurobarometer data including all countries that joined the EU in May 2004 (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia). The period covered the time shortly before the accession of these countries to the EU (data from fall 2003), right after the accession (fall 2004), and after years of EU membership (spring 2006 and fall 2007). Because the model was specified as a causal path model including mediation effects, the appropriate method was to estimate the model as a structural equation model. It was tested whether the introduced theoretical model could depict the attitude structure underlying EU support in the whole period around the accession. The results – presented in detail for the latest point in time – revealed that the model was confirmed in all but one aspect.

All specified determinants of EU support had a significant, positive effect. Support for the EU depended on generalized, systemic, and democratic performance, as well as on European identity, whereas the generalized and systemic performance were especially important. Moreover, EU support was indirectly affected by attitudes towards the performances of the nation-state. National generalized, systemic, and democratic performance had a strong positive effect on their equivalent European attitudes, which in turn positively affected EU support. This meant that citizens used these national attitudes as shortcuts when evaluating equivalent specific EU aspects or EU support in general. However, the empirical test revealed that the direct effect of national identity on EU support did not exist, and this national attitude was only an indirect determinant of EU support, like the other national attitudes in the model. Hence, in the following analyses this path was no longer assumed. Nevertheless, the presumed attitude structure underlying EU support was by and large approved empirically for 2007. Most importantly, the role and position of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics, which was the central concern in this study, was empirically confirmed. This modified model, which fit the data very well, was used to answer all the following research questions because it turned out that it best described the attitude structure underlying EU support.

In the next step, the model was also tested for the relevant points in time prior to 2007. The general model was confirmed for the whole period under investigation. A multiple group comparison, which tested for significant differences be-
tween the various points in time, revealed some changes, however. Most importantly, the direct influence of national performances on their equivalent EU performances and their indirect influence on EU support decreased over time. The use of cognitive heuristics decreased as experiences with the EU increased. The EU in general and its specific objects were evaluated more and more independently from the nation-state. However, shortcuts were still useful and necessary even after years of EU membership. In addition to the changing influence of shortcuts, the relevance of specific EU attitudes changed as well. The explanatory power of EU systemic performance decreased over time, which revealed that the economic dimension of the EU lost its importance while other dimensions became more and more salient in the citizens’ attitude structure. Particularly, the influence of European identity as a determinant of EU support grew, meaning that this affective-evaluative attitude was more and more connected to the European regime.

After testing the model of EU support for the entire population, it was tested for different knowledge groups. The third research question was theoretically derived from the heterogeneity assumption, which presumes that the less and the more sophisticated persons form opinions in different ways. Therefore, I asked whether the influence of national attitudes serving as cognitive heuristics on EU support in CEE varied depending on the citizens’ level of political sophistication. It was assumed that the less sophisticated need shortcuts more urgently than the more sophisticated in the European context because the less sophisticated do not possess much independent information on the EU. In contrast, more sophisticated persons can distinguish better between the national and European political level, and form opinions about complex European aspects more easily. Hypotheses concerning the effects of the level of political sophistication on the attitude structure underlying EU support followed the assumption that the influence of national attitudes on specific EU attitudes and EU support was higher among the less sophisticated during the whole period under investigation. Technically speaking, political sophistication was modeled as a moderator variable, which means that the attitude structure was assumed to vary depending on the level of political sophistication. Generally, the proposed model fit both knowledge groups; however, a moderator effect was confirmed for all points in time. The relevance of single determinants of support varied when less and more sophisticated persons were compared. Interestingly, the influence of national attitudes serving as shortcuts was generally higher among the less sophisticated. This was true for all attitudes dealing with various kinds of political performance. Hence, the level of sophistication influences the opinion formation regarding cognitive-evaluative attitudes because the presence or absence of knowledge of the object to be evaluated simplifies or impedes the independent evaluation of this object, respectively. In addition to the influence on the attitude structure, political so-
phistication also influences the level of EU support. The more sophisticated showed significantly higher support rates for the EU than the less sophisticated. This was confirmed for the whole period around the accession, and the level of support in both groups did not align over time. Increasing experience with the EU did not narrow the gap between the knowledge groups in the attitude structure or in the level of EU support, meaning that the heterogeneity assumption was vivid during different stages of the integration process and should not be ignored when modeling or explaining EU attitudes.

In summary, citizens from CEE use cognitive heuristics when evaluating European aspects and the EU in general. They need these shortcuts to form opinions about the EU before and after the accession to the EU. The analyses confirm that ordinary citizens rely on these shortcuts; however, there are differences between them depending on the level of political sophistication. Regarding the European context, heuristics are more important in the opinion formation process of the less sophisticated compared to the more sophisticated persons.

Overall, my study exhibit theoretical and empirical insights into the opinion formation process towards a remote and complex political object and the attitude structure underlying EU support under the condition of little experience with the EU.

What are the implications of the results of this study for further scientific research? What are the recommendations for political action? Starting with the latter question, one recommendation is that political authorities should take into account the opinion formation process and the cognitive resources of citizens when communicating European issues. As ordinary citizens seldom possess enough information about the EU to form independent opinions and as experience with the EU only slightly increases the independence of EU attitudes from national attitudes, specific strategies should be applied to increase awareness of European issues. Increased awareness is advantageous for the EU from two perspectives. First, from a normative, democratic theoretical point of view, it would be appropriate if citizens thought of the EU independently from the nation-state because the EU is a political system with its own decision-making competences. This holds especially true in times of EP elections or EU referendums, i.e. in times when political attitudes are transformed into political behavior. From a normative point of view, participation in the EU should be guided by thinking about the EU and not by thinking about another political level. Only then it is possible for citizens to express their preferences with regard to the EU-topic they should decide on. More abstractly, awareness or cognition of a system is a precondition for the development of a civic culture – the kind of political culture which best suits a democratic regime (Almond/Verba 1965: 29-30). Citizens can only start to
build generalized support if they are aware of the regime, and if they generate opinions and attitudes explicitly towards this regime.

Second, the study showed that more sophisticated citizens support the EU to a higher extent than less sophisticated persons. Because the EU, like any other democratic regime, is interested in a high generalized support independent from day-to-day politics, efforts to increase this support would be in the interest of the political elites on the European and national levels. These elites know that they cannot outpace ordinary citizens because these citizens have a say on the progression of European integration. Citizens can influence the integration process most markedly in referendums on new treaties that deal with the deepening or widening of the Union. With this power, citizens can show their dissatisfaction with the EU, and they can hinder or slow down European integration. If such a vote against Europe is based on informed opinions on the EU, the result would be a democratic decision mirroring the will of the people. However, if the result is due to no information or misinformation about the issue, the result might not be in the interest of the people. For example, the first Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty failed after a campaign that was not highly politicized by the proponents of the treaty, such as the main Irish governmental parties or Irish MEPs.

Thus, the specific topic and the relevance of the referendum did not reach the people. When the second and successful referendum on the same topic was held only one and a half year later, the proponents were more engaging. It is likely that, on the second try, the politicians were able to get through to ordinary citizens who in turn started to think about their real preferences as they became aware of the content of the referendum and its importance. In addition, the economic crisis, which hit Ireland before the second referendum, led many people to pin their hopes on the EU (Craig 2009).

All in all, more knowledge of the EU would make it easier for ordinary citizens to express their preferences on European matters. Furthermore, if the EU and the national elites are able to increase knowledge of the EU, EU support would likely increase as well, based on this study’s results which have shown clear differences in the level of support between the less and the more sophisticated. Increased support would make it more unlikely for referendums to fail; increased generalized support would increase the legitimacy of the EU in an informal way, which could outweigh the structural democratic deficit of the EU to a certain extent.

97 After the first referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, a Flash Eurobarometer asked the people of Ireland the following question: “Please tell me what are the reasons why you voted ‘no’ to the treaty?”

The most popular answer chosen by a relative majority of 22 percent of the respondents was “Because I do not know enough about the Treaty and would not want to vote for something I am not familiar with” (The Gallup Organization 2008).
Increased awareness or increased sophistication can be achieved by a specific kind of communication. By using the media, the EU and especially the national elites would be well advised to supply information related to the EU during ‘normal’ times, i.e. times other than during referendums or election campaigns. In addition, this information should be supplemented by specific information about EU politics during EP election campaigns or, if an EU referendum is held, by information about the content of the referendum and the implications of the referendum’s result for the whole EU (cf. Gabel/Hix 2005). It is presumed that more information leads to decisions based, to a higher extent, on original European attitudes and issue positions related to the EU directly (Hobolt 2005). Having more information, citizens would be better equipped to make decisions that would be in accordance with their preferences and overall attitude towards the EU. They could better understand the consequences of a decision for the whole EU. And they would not simply use EP elections or referendums as an instrument to punish the current national government. A political environment that consists of intense discussions on the EU would influence the quality of the citizens’ decisions because such an environment affects their opportunity, ability, and motivation to form opinions (Kukliński et al. 2001).

However, it would not be enough to simply increase the intensity of EU information. Such information, like any other political information, would have to be provided in a way that is understandable for ordinary citizens who have little prior knowledge. Therefore, politicians and the media should break down complex EU information into pieces that can be easily understood by ordinary citizens. There is a need for elementary information about the functioning of the EU, its institutions, competences, and relevance for citizens’ lives. If political actors do not succeed in communicating the EU basics, citizens will continue to rely on shortcuts from the national context, and independent attitudes towards the EU are unlikely to form. The politicians, through the media, must explain that the EU is a system that is connected to the nation-state, but that it has many of its own competences and powers, and therefore, it should be evaluated independently from the member states. To say it in another way, it should be clear that heuristics from the nation-state are not appropriate heuristics when evaluating the EU because the EU is no longer just an extension of national politics on the European level but another level of governance that deserves independent evaluations.

In a nutshell, politicians and the media should provide more information on the EU, more generic EU information uncoupled from national issues, and simpler information that can be easily understood by citizens having little prior knowledge of EU matters.
Besides these practical implications, which led to recommendations for political actors, there are some implications for further scientific research. This work closes a gap in research by describing and explaining the attitude structure underlying EU support in the EU’s post-communist member states. However, the study also raises further questions.

One implication tackles the method used. Of course, SEM is the appropriate method and my structural equation model fits the data and it adequately describes the attitude structure of CEE citizens before and after the accession. However, this model was only partially tested against other models. It might be possible that another model, which includes the same determinants of support but which is specified in another way (e.g. as a non-recursive model), would fit the data as well. SEM can only show whether or not a model, which results from theoretical considerations, can be empirically proven. But this method does not allow for a secure confirmation regarding the question of whether the proposed structure actually is the best structure to represent the ‘real’ attitude structure. Therefore, it would be useful, in the next step, to test the assumed theoretical model against more other plausible models with competing assumptions concerning the paths between the latent constructs included. Such a comparison of models would further clarify the attitude structure underlying EU support.

Another limitation of this study is the data that was used. By relying on cross-sectional data from the Eurobarometer data sets, which were the most appropriate data available, the opinion formation process can only be described theoretically. With such data, it is not possible to ‘survey’ the opinion formation directly because all attitudes were inquired at the same point in time. Even though the opinion formation process is not directly observable because it happens in a person’s internal memory, there are different methods which would improve the empirical analysis of this process. For instance, conducting experiments would be one possible way to improve empirical analyses. This method could be used to find out what information is linked in long-term memory, which signals activate which considerations, what happens if additional information is given to the participants, and so forth. Second, if relying on surveys, panel data may allow for a deeper look into the opinion formation process because repeated questions to the same person are better in clarifying how information is stored and structured in long-term memory. Moreover, these data would improve the temporal comparison as well because it would be possible to analyze opinion changes over time on an individual basis, which was not the aim of this study but which would widen our knowledge of the effects of increasing experience with the EU on ordinary citizens.

These methodological aspects point out that SEM is the appropriate method to estimate causal path models, but a researcher should be aware of the limitations of this method as well. SEM depends on the quality of the data and can only re-
veal if the theoretically presumed causal structure is confirmed by the data used; it can neither tell whether the presumed model is the best fitting model nor can it verify the opinion formation process behind this structure.

Another limitation concerns the decision to analyze the attitudes of Central and Eastern Europeans in the whole region using pooled data sets. It was the aim of this study to explain the attitude structure of ordinary Central and Eastern Europeans regardless of nationality. This was possible because the post-communist countries were quite homogeneous with respect to important political aspects. However, single country studies might be a logical continuation of this study. The assumed model could be tested for every single country included in this study, after having theoretically elaborated on possible differences in the attitude structure of citizens from different national contexts. Possible differences between countries that might affect attitudes towards the EU include the different framing of the EU in the mass media, divergent attitudes of national political elites towards the EU, or the different role of national identity. However, such a comparison of countries would be restricted to a descriptive interpretation because it is inadequate to estimate hierarchical linear models, which are multilevel analyses that can explain context specific effects on relations on the individual level, with only eight cases. To apply hierarchical linear models, the number of countries included would have to be increased.

This leads to another possible improvement of this study. My model can be tested in other contexts as well. This model was designed for the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in May 2004. There were three reasons for the selection of these countries: their communist past, their new EU membership, and their common EU accession. The last reason was only applied to conduct a meaningful cross-temporal comparison between all countries having a similar experience in the EU. Therefore, the model could easily be applied to other post-communist EU member states, candidate countries, or applicant countries from shortly before their accession onwards. At this point in time, this includes the two countries from the second eastern enlargement round in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Montenegro, plus two new applicant countries, Albania and Serbia, and sometime in the future, every other post-communist European country that can become a stable democracy and thus may join the EU.

Furthermore, the model may be transferable to non-post-communist contexts as well. Of course, the theoretical considerations and model specification were designed for the post-communist context. Because of the context dependency of many political scientific theories, theory-building was guided by the EU’s role during the transformation process of these young democracies and the recentness of their accession to the EU. However, many assumptions underlying the model can be transferred to other contexts. The main arguments for specifying national
attitudes systematically as heuristics apply for all new EU member states because these arguments deal with the complex multi-level structure of the EU and its remoteness and distance. Therefore, it is conceivable to extend the theoretical considerations to non-post-communist contexts and to test the model in possible future EU member states, like Turkey or the EFTA states, like Iceland that actually applied in 2009, Norway, and Switzerland. Furthermore, if the argumentation is not restricted to post-communist countries, my model may be used to analyze support for the EU during other accession periods from decades ago. This means that my considerations can be generalized and applied to all member states in the period around their EU accession, which may generate findings that can be used to predict future European developments.

Thinking even further, the model may even be applied in established EU member states. It is often argued that the EU is seen as a remote, distant, and complex political object even in these established EU countries. Therefore, a comparison between new and old EU member states – between countries with little and a lot of experience with the EU – regarding the use of cognitive heuristics would be fruitful. It would bring further clarity about the use and necessity of shortcuts in different political contexts throughout the EU. And it would bring further clarity about the status of the EU in different contexts, which could lead to general hypotheses and conclusions about the status of the EU for its citizens.

This study elaborated on new theoretical considerations and brought about new empirical findings regarding the formation of opinions with a special emphasis on the role of cognitive heuristics in the attitude structure underlying EU support in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the EU accession. The application of further methodological specifications, like an intensive model comparison in SEM or the use of better suited data, if available in the future, as well as the widening of the scope of the study to other political contexts and the inclusion of assessing context effects on individual attitudes are possible enhancements or expansions of this study. Such developments would increase our knowledge of opinion formation and attitude structures underlying EU support in general. This study has provided a basis for such further steps.
Appendices

A: Data sets

The following data sets are used for the multivariate analyses:
Candidate Countries Eurobarometer
  2003.4 (ZA 3986) Fall 2003
Standard Eurobarometer
  62.0 (ZA 4229) Fall 2004
  65.2 (ZA 4506) Spring 2006
  68.1 (ZA 4565) Fall 2007

The following data sets are used for the descriptive analyses:
Candidate Countries Eurobarometer
  2001.1 (ZA 3978) Fall 2001
  2002.2 (ZA 3979) Fall 2002
  2003.2 (ZA 3983) Spring 2003
  2003.4 (ZA 3986) Fall 2003
  2004.1 (ZA 4246) Spring 2004
Standard Eurobarometer
  62.0 (ZA 4229) Fall 2004
  63.4 (ZA 4411) Spring 2005
  64.2 (ZA 4414) Fall 2005
  65.2 (ZA 4506) Spring 2006
  66.1 (ZA 4526) Fall 2006
  67.2 (ZA 4530) Spring 2007
  68.1 (ZA 4565) Fall 2007

B: Question wording

N.B.: For each question, the EB and the CCEB question wordings are listed. The CCEB question wordings can be found in the Basic English Questionnaire supplied by the Gallup Organization (2003). The EB question wordings, which are identical for the three points in time, can be found in the Questionnaires prepared by TNS Opinion and Social (2007a, 2006, 2007b). The questions below are sorted by the latent constructs they intend to measure. For each question the original coding and the recoded values (in parentheses) are reported. The indicators are
recode to harmonize the measurement of the EB and CCEB indicators and to sort the values of each item in a way that higher values are associated with higher EU support according to the assumptions described in the theoretical part of this study.

**Generalized support for the EU**

*Membership in the EU (EB)*: Generally speaking, do you think that (our country)'s membership of the European Union is …? 1 a good thing (2), 2 a bad thing (0), 3 neither good nor bad (1), 4 DK (8).

*Membership in the EU (CCEB)*: Generally speaking, do you think that (country)'s membership of the European Union would be …? 1 a good thing (2), 2 a bad thing (0), 3 neither good nor bad (1), 4 DK (spontaneous) (8).

*Image of the EU (EB)*: In general, does the EU conjure up for you a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image? 1 very positive (4), 2 fairly positive (3), 3 neutral (2), 4 fairly negative (1), 5 very negative image (0), 6 DK (8).

*Image of the EU (CCEB)*: And, in general, do you have a very positive, fairly positive, neutral, fairly negative or very negative image of the European Union? 5 very positive (4), 4 fairly positive (3), 3 neutral (2), 2 fairly negative (1), 1 very negative image (0), 9 DK (spontaneous) (8).

**EU: generalized performance**

*Trust in European institutions (EB)*: And, for each of them, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? The European Parliament / The European Commission / The Council of Ministers of the European Union / The Court of Justice of the European Communities. 1 tend to agree (1), 2 tend to disagree (0), 3 DK (8).

*Trust in European institutions (CCEB)*: And, for each of them, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? The European Parliament / The European Commission / The Council of Ministers of the European Union / The Court of Justice of the European Communities. 1 tend to agree (1), 2 tend to disagree (0), 9 DK (8).

**EU: systemic performance**

*Role of the EU in policies (EB)*: And for each of the following issues in (our country), do you think that the EU plays a positive role, a negative role or neither positive nor negative role? The economic situation / Fighting unemployment / Fighting terrorism / Defence and foreign affairs / Healthcare system / Pensions / Protecting the environment. 1 positive role (2), 2 negative role (0), 3 neither positive nor negative role (1), 4 DK (8).

*Role of the EU in policies (CCEB)*: And for each of the following issues in (our country), do you think that the EU plays a positive role, a negative role or neither positive nor negative role? Economic situation / Unemployment / Terror-
ism / Defence/Foreign affairs / Health care system / Pensions / Protecting the environment. 1 positive role (2), 2 negative role (0), 3 neither positive nor negative role (1), 9 DK (8).

EU: democratic performance

Satisfaction with democracy in EU (EB): And how about the way democracy works in the European Union? 1 very satisfied (3), 2 fairly satisfied (2), 3 not very satisfied (1), 4 not at all satisfied (0), 5 DK (8).

Satisfaction with democracy in EU (CCEB): On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union? 4 very satisfied (3), 3 fairly satisfied (2), 2 not very satisfied (1), 1 not at all satisfied (0), 9 DK (spontaneous) (8).

European identity

Attachment to Europe/EU (EB): People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe/the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to Europe/the European Union? 1 very attached (3), 2 fairly attached (2), 3 not very attached (1), 4 not at all attached (0), 5 DK (8).

Attachment to Europe/EU (CCEB): People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe/the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to Europe/the European Union? 1 very attached (3), 2 fairly attached (2), 3 not very attached (1), 4 not at all attached (0), 9 DK (8).

Nation-state: generalized performance

Trust in national institutions (EB): I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? The (nationality) Government / The (nationality) Parliament / Justice/The (nationality) legal system. 1 tend to trust (1), 2 tend not to trust (0), 3 DK (8).

Trust in national institutions (CCEB): I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it? The (nationality) Government / The (nationality) Parliament / Justice/The (country) legal system. 1 tend to trust (1), 2 tend not to trust (0), 9 DK (8).

Nation-state: economic performance

Expectations (EB): What are your expectations for the next twelve months: will the next twelve months be better, worse or the same, when it comes to…? The economic situation in (our country) / The employment situation in (our country). 1 better (2), 2 worse (0), 3 same (1), 4 DK (8).

Expectations (CCEB): What are your expectations for the year to come: will 2004 be better, worse or the same, when it comes to…? The economic situa-
The employment situation in (country). 3 better (2), 2 worse (0), 1 the same (1), 9 DK (8).

Nation-state: democratic performance

Satisfaction with democracy in country (EB): On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (our country)? 1 very satisfied (3), 2 fairly satisfied (2), 3 not very satisfied (1), 4 not at all satisfied (0), 5 DK (8).

Satisfaction with democracy in country (CCEB): On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (our country)? 4 very satisfied (3), 3 fairly satisfied (2), 2 not very satisfied (1), 1 not at all satisfied (0), 9 DK (spontaneous) (8).

National identity

Attachment to own country (EB): People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe/the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to (our country)? 1 very attached (3), 2 fairly attached (2), 3 not very attached (1), 4 not at all attached (0), 5 DK (8).

Attachment to own country (CCEB): People may feel different degrees of attachment to their town or village, to their region, to their country or to Europe/the European Union. Please tell me how attached you feel to (our country)? 1 very attached (3), 2 fairly attached (2), 3 not very attached (1), 4 not at all attached (0), 9 DK (8).

C: Additional tables

N.B.: The following EFA rely on the original CCEB and EB data sets including missing values. Factor analyses calculated with imputed data sets can produce different results for each of the five imputed data sets (e.g. different numbers of factors). I forgo to deal with the possibilities to solve this problem because the presented analyses are only additional analyses which do not substantially bring forward my argumentation. The presentation of the EFA results conducted with the non-imputed data sets using listwise deletion serves my purpose.

To simplify temporal comparison of the EFA, the order of the indicators is kept identical in all points in time. The order depends on the output of the EFA of 2007, which was guided by the order of the extracted factors, the size of the factor loadings, and the substantial meaning of the items.
Table C.1: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003

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<tr>
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</table>

Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8125. Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 51%. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.2: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2004

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</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8344. Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 49%. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.3: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2006

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Source: Eurobarometer 65.2 (Spring 2006). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8238. Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 52%. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.4: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2003

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<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
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<td>Trust: EP</td>
<td>1.00 (0.91)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Council</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
<td>0.65 (0.49)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.73)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td>0.91 (0.63)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
<td>0.86 (0.69)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
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<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td>Trust: National government</td>
<td>1.10 (0.86)</td>
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<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>National economic performance</td>
<td>Expectation: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.83)</td>
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Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8125. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. RMSEA: 0.041; confidence interval: 0.039-0.043; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.984; AGFI: 0.979. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
Table C.5: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2004

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<th>Indicators</th>
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<th>S.E.</th>
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<td>1.00 (0.89)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Trust: Commission</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td>Trust: Council</td>
<td>1.05 (0.87)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
<td>0.88 (0.79)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
<td>0.76 (0.60)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td>0.96 (0.64)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
<td>0.70 (0.53)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
<td>0.58 (0.37)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National generalized performance</strong></td>
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<td>1.10 (0.86)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
<td>1.00 (0.81)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National economic performance</strong></td>
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<td>1.00 (0.78)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectation: Employment situation</td>
<td>0.91 (0.69)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8344. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. RMSEA: 0.039; confidence interval: 0.038-0.041; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.986; AGFI: 0.981. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
Table C.6: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe, 2006

<table>
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<th>S.E.</th>
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<td>Image of the EU</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
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<td>1.00 (0.89)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Trust: Commission</td>
<td>1.03 (0.91)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Council</td>
<td>1.06 (0.92)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
<td>0.91 (0.82)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>EU’s role: Defense</td>
<td>0.76 (0.63)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
<td>0.78 (0.61)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.67)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td>0.92 (0.61)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
<td>0.72 (0.55)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
<td>1.00 (0.81)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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<td>Expectation: Economic situation</td>
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Source: Eurobarometer 65.2 (Spring 2006). Pooled data, eight countries, samples of almost equal size, N=8238. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. RMSEA: 0.044; confidence interval: 0.042-0.045; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.981; AGFI: 0.974. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
Table C.7: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2003

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<td>Trust: EP</td>
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<td>0.83 0.25</td>
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<td>0.64</td>
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<tr>
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Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5422 (less sophisticated), N=2703 (more sophisticated). Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 51% for both groups. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.8: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2004

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Source: Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5017 (less sophisticated), N=3327 (more sophisticated). Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 51% for less and 46% for more sophisticated group. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.9: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2006

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<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
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<td>0.64</td>
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<td>0.45 0.23 0.28</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
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Source: Eurobarometer 65.2 (Spring 2006). Pooled data, eight countries, N=4311 (less sophisticated), N=3927 (more sophisticated). Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 53% for less and 50% for more sophisticated group. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
Table C.10: Explorative factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2007

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<tr>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expectation: National economic situation</td>
<td>0.22 0.56</td>
<td>0.22 0.56</td>
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</table>

Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries, N=5274 (less sophisticated), N=2999 (more sophisticated). Principal axis factoring, varimax rotation, explained variance: 50% for both groups. Italic figures indicate meaningful cross-loadings; loadings below 0.2 are not reported.
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<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Less sophisticated</th>
<th>More sophisticated</th>
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<td>Factor loadings S.E.</td>
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<td>1.00 (0.81) -</td>
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<td>1.03 (0.90) 0.02</td>
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<td>1.03 (0.87) 0.02</td>
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<td>0.67 (0.47) 0.03</td>
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<td>1.00 (0.72) -</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
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<td>0.92 (0.70) 0.03</td>
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<td>0.83 (0.69) 0.02</td>
<td>0.85 (0.66) 0.03</td>
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<td>1.00 (0.82) -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance</td>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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<td>0.60 (0.47) 0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National economic</td>
<td>Expectation: Economic situation</td>
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<td>1.00 (0.84) -</td>
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<td>performance</td>
<td>Expectation: Employment situation</td>
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<td>0.86 (0.75) 0.03</td>
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Source: Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.4 (Fall 2003). Pooled data, eight countries. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. Less sophisticated: N=5422, RMSEA: 0.042; confidence interval: 0.040-0.044; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.984; AGFI: 0.978. More sophisticated: N=2703, RMSEA: 0.040; confidence interval: 0.037-0.043; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.983; AGFI: 0.976. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
# Table C.12: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2004

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<th>More sophisticated</th>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Trust: Commission</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
<td>0.91 (0.81)</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<td>EU systemic performance</td>
<td>EU’s role: Defense</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Terrorism</td>
<td>0.76 (0.61)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Economic situation</td>
<td>1.00 (0.69)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
<td>0.96 (0.67)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
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<td>EU’s role: Pensions</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Health care</td>
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<td>EU’s role: Environment</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>National generalized performance</td>
<td>Trust: National government</td>
<td>1.09 (0.87)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust: National justice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expectation: Employment situation</td>
<td>0.91 (0.69)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
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Source: Eurobarometer 62.0 (Fall 2004). Pooled data, eight countries. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. Less sophisticated: N=5017, RMSEA: 0.041; confidence interval: 0.038-0.043; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.986; AGFI: 0.981. More sophisticated: N=3327, RMSEA: 0.039; confidence interval: 0.036-0.041; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.984; AGFI: 0.979. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.

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https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845238043
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Table C.13: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2006

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<td>-</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trust: Court</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EU’s role: Unemployment</td>
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<td>generalized</td>
<td>Trust: National parliament</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>performance</td>
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Source: Eurobarometer 65.2 (Spring 2006). Pooled data, eight countries. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. Less sophisticated: N=4311, RMSEA: 0.046; confidence interval: 0.044-0.048; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.980; AGFI: 0.973. More sophisticated: N=3927, RMSEA: 0.040; confidence interval: 0.038-0.043; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.983; AGFI: 0.977. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
Table C.14: Confirmatory factor analysis for support for the EU in Central and Eastern Europe differentiated by knowledge groups, 2007

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<td>1.00 (0.89) -</td>
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<td>1.03 (0.89) 0.02</td>
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<td>Trust: Court</td>
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Source: Eurobarometer 68.1 (Fall 2007). Pooled data, eight countries. Unstandardized factor loadings, standardized factor loadings in parentheses. Level of significance of all loadings: p<0.001. Less sophisticated: N=5274, RMSEA: 0.045; confidence interval: 0.043-0.047; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.978; AGFI: 0.970. More sophisticated: N=2999, RMSEA: 0.044; confidence interval: 0.041-0.047; p-close: 1.00; GFI: 0.978; AGFI: 0.969. All estimations are based on five separate imputations.
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